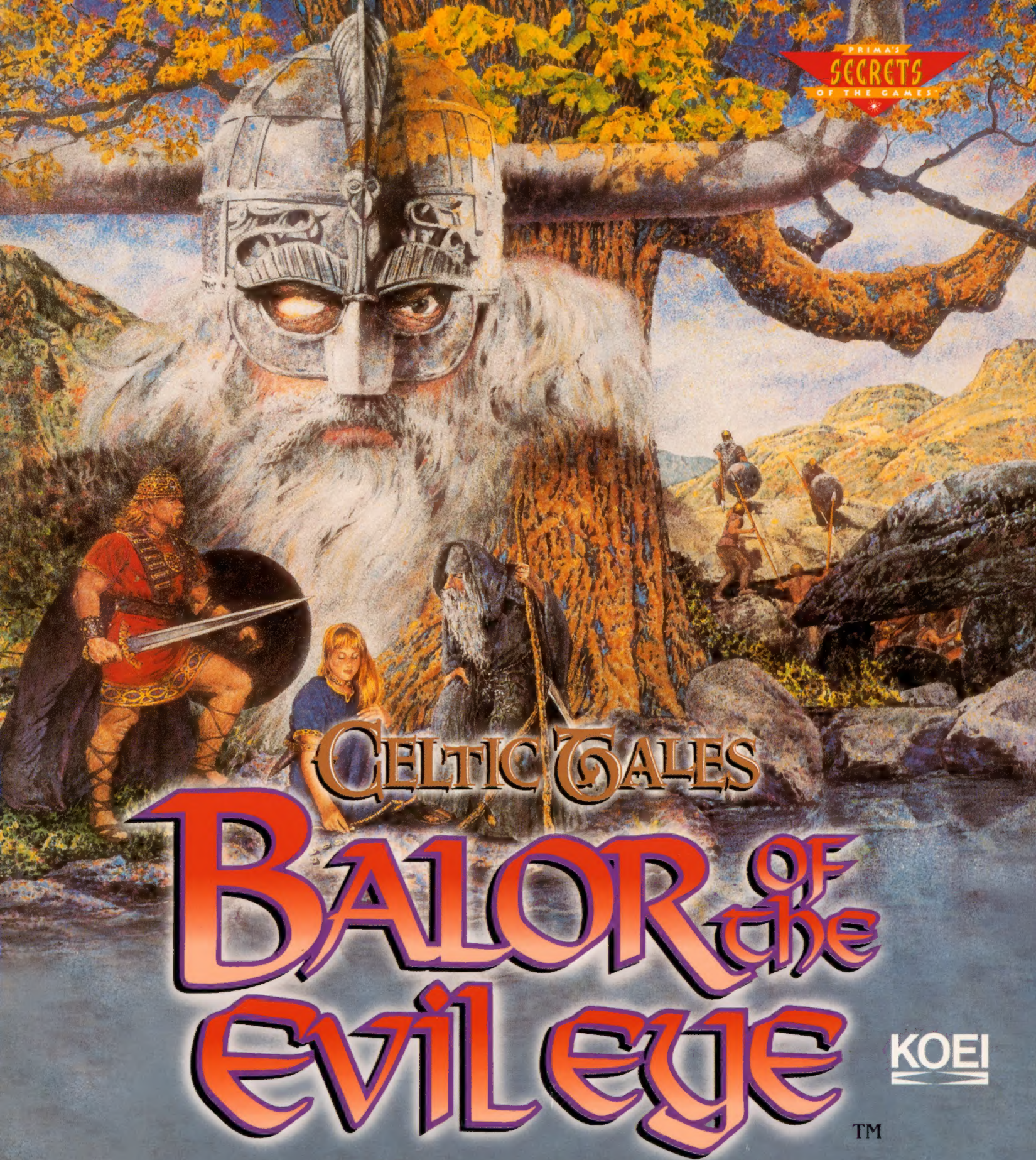

THE OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE

RONALD WARTOW

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Celtic Tales

Balor of the Evil Eye™

The Official Strategy Guide

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Celtic Tales
Baldur's Gate: Tales of the Sword Coast™

The Official Strategy Guide

by Ronald Wartow

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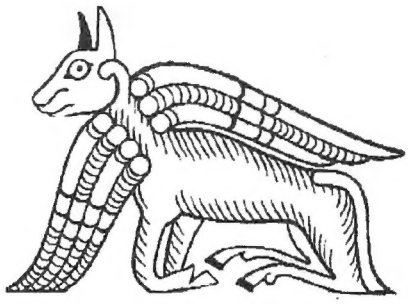

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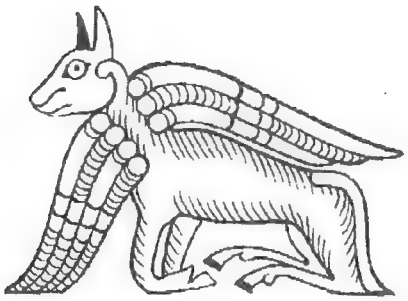


Foreword

Welcome to Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye!

You are about to enter a world more unique than any you have ever experienced. Leave what you know behind, all you need is your imagination.

Herein lie the tools to travel through time and create your own destiny. There are endless roles for you to take and many challenges to meet. With the help of this book you can succeed where others failed.

Good luck in your adventures. And, thank you for playing *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*. We hope you enjoy the game!

–The KOEI Staff

Dedications and Acknowledgments

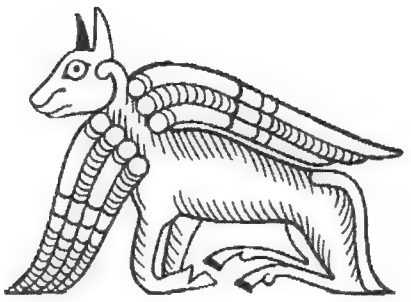
Ronald Wartow gratefully recognizes:

The Prima family who graciously welcomed me into the fold. Special thanks to Roger Stewart and Hartley Lesser, the cheeses, who displayed confidence in me sight unseen. Much gratitude to my project editor, Jennifer Fox, for tolerating my first-time-Prima-author questions with speed and accuracy. She would have made a great galley slave commander for ancient Roman sea captains.

Kudos to KOEI, whose games I've played and enjoyed since the Apple II days. *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* was wonderfully addictive and made writing the book that much easier. KOEI's Julie Sladcik and Mark Hughes provided timely and helpful support, and for that I am grateful.

Thanks to the ubiquitous aunts and uncles, surrogate moms and dads all: Jeannette and Eddie, Etta and Sam, Edie and Harry, Arlene and Bernie, Mary and Murray, Evie and Phil, Edie and Leon, Bess and Mo, and Bea. And, the offspring.

And finally, Hal, Gail, and David!



How to Use this Book

Look for the bulleted lists located at the end of Chapters 1 through 10 of this book. These snappy lists contain condensed guidance and tips to help you gain the upper hand over Balor, Conann, and the rival rulers barking at your ruler's heels. Part of each of these lists emphasizes the key points made in that chapter. A terrible price was paid to obtain these gems, so terrible that revealing the particulars is unthinkable.

The lists represent a very low strategy level. You might want to play a few games using these broad-based tips before delving into the book's fine points.

You will not find a complete step-by-step walk through the game within these pages. A few minutes after beginning your first game of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*, the infinite variety of results that can occur from the actions taken by Eire's rulers and champions clearly demonstrates why a walk-through is impractical.

That doesn't mean winning can't be hastened appreciably by what this book contains. Complete and effective strategies for mastering all phases of the game are explored in text, easy-to-follow tables, and graphic screens captured during actual game play.

- *To ease novice players into Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye, each major command section of the game is preceded by a short review of the pertinent game mechanics. This summarizes what the player can encounter at critical game locations. Veterans, too, may benefit from this training, because the impact of certain game commands may not be readily apparent from the screen and important consequences of actions taken might be overlooked.*

- *On the Status and Attribute screen for each champion, the game furnishes an impressive sort feature. See Figure 1-1 on page XII. This feature is especially useful when the ruler must decide who will receive that next juicy assignment. If the assignment calls for a champion who possesses the ability to perform*

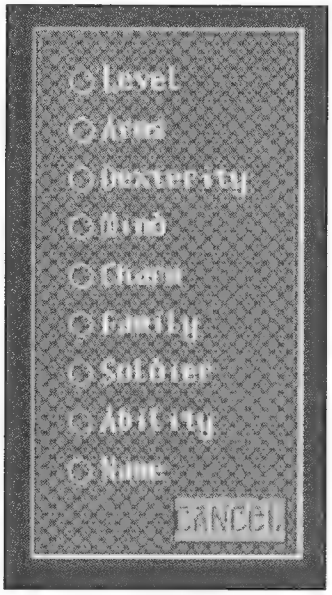


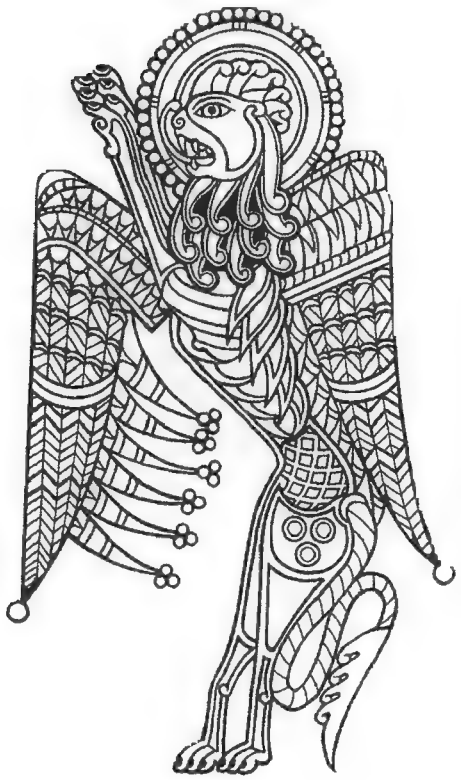
Figure I-1.
The Game's Handy Sort Feature.

something that ordinarily requires high Charm, like Diplomacy, sort the available champions by Charm. The tribe's Charm leader will appear at the front of the champion selection box, ready for the ruler to assign the task.

✣ *You can speed up the movement of champions on the province and battle screens by double-clicking the mouse at or near the destination of the active champion. The first few times you assign a champion to mine rocks on the other end of the province, it's enjoyable to watch and hear the champion walk confidently to the designated spot. However, after playing for a while, you might prefer to get on with the next command and to just teleport your champions to the intended destination. To do this, when the champion begins to walk, double-click the mouse near the destination. Like a fired rocket, the champion zooms to the pile of rocks. Even automated game sequences, such as Fomor raids, can be sped up by double-clicking anywhere on the screen as each Fomor is highlighted before moving.*

✣ *Try this move to accelerate through rest periods in combat, as well. Single-click the mouse, and the rest period ends for all combatants. The next turn begins right away.*

Chapter One



Overview

You must defeat Balor within 70 game years from the time you first begin play of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*. A glance at the Eire calendar shows a year comprised of 13 months: one season (Samhain) of four months each and three seasons (Imbolc, Beltene, and Lughnasad) of three months each. Multiplying the 70-year time maximum by the 13-month year, you get exactly 910 turns to unify Eire, become the High Ruler, defeat Conann, retrieve the Gae Bolga, and finish off Balor.

Actually, the game ends at an unspecified random number of turns after the 910th turn. Although you might want 1,500 turns to win, in all likelihood, you'll have about 50 turns from the end of the 70th year.

Figure 1-1.
Do you still think you can win? Balor doesn't.

In the over 200 hours I played *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* to research and write this book, I was always able to complete the game comfortably within 910 turns. Most games, even when I took the lengthier diplomatic road to victory, consumed between 15 and 30 game years.

Eire's Geography

Eire's provinces range from lush farmland and forests that seem to go on forever, to harsh unforgiving piles of rock. The severe winters intensify the understandable fear of the island's inhabitants, who, above all, are concerned about the productivity of their land during the spring months of Imbolc.

When you first start the game, the province(s) of your chosen ruler is the only visible portion of the Eire map observable at the Tribal Council or at the main Province screen. Even the province names are hidden. You will need to accomplish many years and seasons of extensive exploration before the map is completely revealed to your ruler.

As you explore, conquer, and drive deeper into the heart of Eire, it becomes obvious that you must circumvent natural obstacles on the landscape. Lakes, rivers, or mountain ranges often block direct access to provinces bordering your own. When planning an exploration scheme, make sure to take these obstacles into account. Otherwise, a journey that might appear to take a month may actually take two months or even longer. Study the geography carefully, so that your ruler doesn't make moves that will hinder progress.

You might want to see the entire map now without having to go through all of the blood, sweat, and tears of playing the game for years. Figure 1-2 shows the full map, normally revealed only after the complete unification of Eire, directly prior to the High Ruler's crowning. Figure 1-2 identifies all provinces by number, and Table 1-1 (see page 4) displays the home provinces, names, and tribes of the game's rulers.

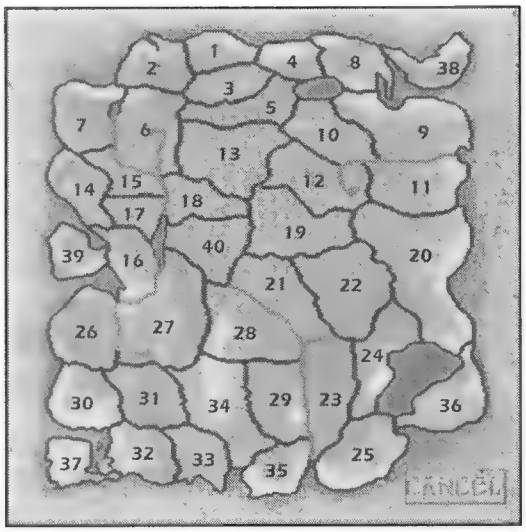


Figure 1-2.
Eire map revealed!

Eire Map Legend*

#	Name	#	Name	#	Name
1	**Strabane**	16	Kilkee	31	Rathmore
2	Donegal	**17**	**Gorl**	32	Schull
3	**Kesh**	18	Cruach	**33**	**Bandon**
4	Omagh	**19**	**Moate**	34	Blarney
5	**Lisnasked**	20	Kilcullen	**35**	**Cobh**
6	**Elphin**	**21**	**Laois**	**36**	**Naas**
7	**Connaught**	**22**	**Athy**	**37**	**Ben Skellig**
8	**Kilrea**	**23**	**Mullinavat**	38	Rathlin Isle
9	**Louth**	**24**	**Raven**	39	Aran Isle
10	Caledon	**25**	**Taghmon**	**40**	**Nenagh**
11	**Tara**	**26**	**Tralee**	**41**	**Tory Island**
12	**Delvin**	27	Croom		
13	Meathas	**28**	**Cashel**	*Occupied provinces are in bold.	
14	**Clifden**	29	Dungarvan		
15	**Ahascragh**	**30**	**Sneem**		

In *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*, all new games open with an identical set-up of rulers, tribes, and provinces. Lugh is always the ruler of the Rodruban tribe and starts every game in his home province of Tara. Similarly, Calatin always starts as the leader of the Bri Leith tribe at Gorl.

The game begins with Eire's 18 tribes and governing rulers, including your chosen ruler, scattered throughout 27 of the country's 41 provinces. Thirteen provinces are unoccupied and ready for peaceful settlement without the need to confront another ruler. The remaining province is Tory Island, home to Balor, the game's chief villain, and his tribe, the Fomors.

Most rulers are likely to have at least one unoccupied province bordering on the tribe's domain. Some rulers control more than one tribe.

TABLE 1-1 Ruler Home Provinces on First Turn*

Number	Province	Ruler	Tribe
36	Naas	Angus Og	Airceltrai
17	Gorl	Calatin	Bri Leith
5	Lisnasked	Concobar	Murias
35	Cobh	Cuchulainn	Eas Aedha
8	Kilrea	Curoi	Tir Tairn
40	Nenagh	Finn	Fianna
6	Elphin	Finvarra	Fer Sidhe
22	Athy	Ilbreach	Gorias
33	Bandon	Lubdan	Aes Sidhe
11	Tara	Lugh	Robruban
26	Tralee	Manannan	Fionnaidh
7	Connaught	Medb	Sligo
24	Raven	Morrigan	Findias
12	Delvin	Nuada	Meadhe
28	Cashel	Senchan	Cnoc Aine
30	Sneem	Sinnan Og	Falias
37	Ben Skellig	Skatha	Dyfedh
1	Strabane	Treon	Sidhe Fuait
41	Tory Island	Balor	Fomor

*Sorted alphabetically by ruler

- *If the ruler controls less than 30 Eire provinces by turn 800, start a new game.*
- *The keys to victory are: conquer 40 provinces, become High Ruler, exile Conann, destroy Balor.*
- *Carefully plan movements to rival or empty provinces. Take geographic barriers into account before crossing your borders.*
- *Tory Island, home of the Fomors, is off limits until the final fight with Balor.*

Chapter Two

The Ruler

The first order of business in *Celtic Tales* is selecting which of the nine champions you wish to become your ruler. The ruler heads a tribe, as well as all of its controlled provinces. The ruler acts out your dream of unifying Eire, collecting the sacred stone runes, achieving High Ruler status, and defeating Balor of the Evil Eye.

Nine Candidates

The nine champions who can become your ruler vary considerably in attributes, qualities, disposition, skills, loyal champions, and provinces controlled.

Figure 2-1.
Select one or up to four champions to play.

Choosing the strongest ruler is a difficult task. Use the following tables to analyze the bewildering array of strengths and weaknesses of each of the nine champions under consideration.

Table 2-1 presents critical data on the nine candidates.

TABLE 2-1 Ruler Selection Criteria

Ruler	Level	Class	Tribe	Prov	Chmp	Folk	Prestige	Skill
Cuchulainn	4	W	Eas Aedha	1	4	2476	97	Heroism
Finn	4	W	Fianna	1	8	3572	101	–
Lugh	4	W	Rodruban	1	2	1814	96	Form
Medb	4	W	Sligo	3	6	6182	189	–
Morrigan	4	W	Findias	3	5	4051	141	–
Angus Og	4	D	Airceltrai	2	7	3830	145	–
Calatin	4	D	Bri Leith	1	3	2064	96	Nature
Manannan	4	B	Fionnaidh	1	6	1874	95	–
Sinnan Og	5	B	Falias	1	3	1899	99	Elements

LEGEND

- **Level** Beginning Experience Level
- **Class** Champion's profession: W=Warrior, D=Druid, B=Bard
- **Tribe** The ruler's followers
- **Prov** Number of provinces ruled
- **Chmp** Number of loyal champions
- **Folk** Total population
- **Prestige** Ruler's overall potency
- **Skill** Inborn (from birth)

Carefully note the number of Provinces, Champions, and Folk–the more the better. For Prestige, the higher the better. Regrettably, for the diplomatically inclined, none of the nominees possesses the essential political, or parley, skills.

Quite a monumental task, this ruler selection business! In Table 2-2 below, take a look at the factors I eventually came to consider before making my choice for the strongest ruler. Most of the categories are self-explanatory, except for Class Dominance. A wise ruler employs an even blend of the three Eire champion classes. Warriors do the tough stuff by fighting, while bards and druids, though both magicians, cast different magic spells.

TABLE 2-2 Strong Ruler Selection Yardstick

	Ruler/Province Strength				Warrior/Mage Strength	
Name	**Prstg**	**Culture**	**Power**	**Chmp**	**Lvls (avg)**	**Class Dominance**
Calatin	97	17	16	6	17 (3)	None
Cuchulainn	101	17	17	4	13 (3)	Mage
Finn	96	26	26	8	16 (2)	None
Angus Og	189	12	15	7	28 (4)	Warrior
Lugh	141	14	15	3	12 (4)	Slight Mage
Manannan	145	12	15	7	29 (4)	Slight Warrior
Medb	96	17	19	8	29 (3-4)	Mage
Morrigan	95	12	12	5	15 (3)	None
Sinnan Og	99	18	16	3	8 (3)	Mage

LEGEND

- **Prstg** — Ruler's Fame in Eire
- **Chmp** — Number of champions (including the ruler)
- **Culture and Power** — If ruler controls more than one province, the average of all provinces
- **Lvls** — Ruler's champions' average beginning experience
- **Class Dominance** — Whether a mage or a warrior class dominates the ruler's champions

And, the Winner Is . . .

Embrace and choose Medb, a seasoned, warrior who is also strong across-the-board in personal attributes. Relish starting the game with her three robust provinces, all brimming with wealth and earnings potential. Drool over the prospects of overrunning weak provinces with her six versatile and powerful champions. When you've had enough of raiding and pillaging, use her gentler, kinder champions, the ones with first-rate diplomatic and negotiation capacities to win over rival rulers. The excitement of victory will occur sooner if you play Medb.

Figure 2-2.
Medb is the strongest ruler to play at the beginning of the game.

The anguish of an early defeat surely looms large if you choose Angus Og, bringing you the ultimate challenge. The druid and his champions are weak, low-level magicians. With these weaklings, who have no spells learned at the outset and no real battle strengths, your road through the game will be a most difficult one.

What about a middle-ground ruler? Describing the legendary Cuchulainn in such seemingly disrespectful terms is not meant as an insult. Cuchulainn is the most balanced of all the ruler candidates. With this ruler, you will be able to invade with enough warriors to win the day, with the mages protecting the home front. When the magicians gain experience and learn more powerful spells, even they can invade alone, while leaving the warriors protecting the homestead.

As the final component of the ruler selection equation, you need to consider how exposed the starting province(s) borders are to rival territories. Early in the game, especially, the chances are excellent that a rival ruler will try to overrun the player's weaker provinces. When the player selects a possible ruler from the game's selection

screen, the Eire map opens, showing the starting province location. The remainder of the map remains blank. To play a game with a less-exposed new domain, simply opt for a leader with a beginning province backed into an Eire corner or at least on the coast. This greatly reduces the number of neighbors, some undoubtedly hostile, with direct access to your greenhorn province.

In any event, the fun and challenge of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* is playing different games with any of the nine champions. Defeating Balor by starting with a weak ruler, rather than a strong one, probably provides more challenge and satisfaction. So, some players may wish to play weaker rulers. However, I recommend that new *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* players select a strong champion as the ruler.

Play Against Yourself

If the game gives you fits as you strive to progress in the beginning, play the game with two, three, or even the game's maximum of four rulers. Keep in mind, however, that the game's designers intended the multiple-ruler option simply to allow a player to compete with up to three other players at a time.

Anyhow, playing more than one ruler in a game eliminates a few rulers from the competition right off the bat. You can combine the strengths of the rulers under your control. One tribe's "fealty" (loyalty) to another is automatic, since there's no danger of the fealty offer being refused. After all, you are essentially pledging fealty to yourself. Fight battles with your rulers and set up one as a sacrificial lamb by surrendering immediately without the messy business of actually fighting. This method of playing represents the ultimate cooperative game mode.

Controlling more than one ruler might ease the pain of a novice player trying to overcome first game jitters. Above all, it is entertaining. Besides, with the instant powerhouse you develop consisting of a Ruler and all of the champions, you should be crowned High Ruler within six to 10 years.

But remember, if you only choose one ruler, you are then opposed by the eight rulers you rejected, to say nothing of the other eight rulers unworthy of your consideration in the first place.

Prestige

Prestige signifies the ruler's eminence or reputation across Eire. It consists of a single number that represents how other rulers, champions, folk, and cattle throughout the entire island feel about your ruler. *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* emphasizes the importance of gaining the highest prestige possible. Many actions affect Prestige. Arguably, this factor is the single most crucial factor in the game.

Starting Prestige varies among the nine ruler candidates. Prestige ratings range from Manannan's low of 95 to Medb's lofty 189. Experience level doesn't really impact Prestige. For example, Sinnan Og's has a Prestige starting point of under 100, though his experience level is higher than any other of the eight candidates. The same rule applies to the number of champions and provinces.

If you want to take the diplomatic route to winning the game, boost Prestige as soon and as quickly as you can. Whether or not a rival ruler becomes allied, then oath-bound, to your ruler is a game calculation determined, in large part, on if your ruler has a higher Prestige than the rival.

Table 2-3 sets forth the actions that elevate and lower Prestige.

TABLE 2-3 Actions Impacting Prestige

Increases
Build Burg
Build Citadel
Peace Grade
Province Settlement
Province Takeover
Oaths Ties
Trade and Tribute Successes
Decreases
Rejections in Trade or Tribute
Surrender a Province
Inertia

Even if you check a ruler's Prestige at the Tribal Council on every turn, the actual formula for calculating Prestige doesn't become evident. Case in point: The initial Tribute offering to a rival tribe ordinarily results in a Peace level of between 20 and 25. Further Tribute offerings normally raise the Peace slightly. Presumably, the initial excitement of the Tribute should result in a huge leap in Prestige. But, Prestige seems totally unaffected by the Tribute offerings.

On the other hand, when you annex another province, Prestige rises by about 40 to 50 points, regardless of whether the province is forcibly or peacefully taken. Sometimes, when you retreat from a lost cause in battle, Prestige raises slightly. Prestige seems to fall slowly if a ruler rests for a turn or performs no domestic command in the ruler's resident province.

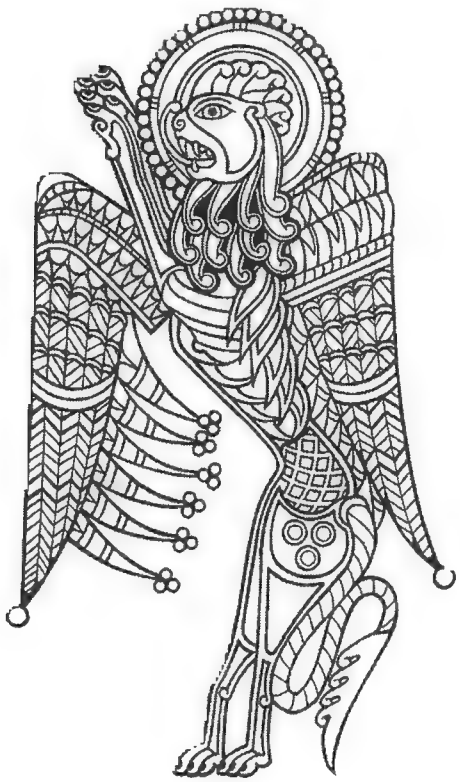
Let's examine the final Prestige rating of a game played with Lugh. In this case, this ruler took the warlike path to unify the provinces of Eire. Diplomacy was used in the end just because Lugh got tired of trampling rival rulers underfoot. By then, his Prestige reached over 2,000; his closest rival held a Prestige of about 600. With this staggering advantage in Prestige, the final diplomatic takeover moves proved a piece of cake.

How would a ruler attain over 2,000 Prestige points? Multiply the 39 provinces (or less if the beginning ruler has more than one province) needed for unification before becoming High Ruler of Eire, by the 40 to 50 Prestige points awarded for each province taken over. This alone computes to close to 2,000 points. While Prestige can be gained in other ways, the only way to raise it steadily is to take over other provinces.

Once your ruler becomes the High Ruler, Prestige no longer is a factor in the game, and it doesn't rise a single point, even after defeating Conann and Balor.

- *Medb rules; Lugh doesn't.*
- *Choose a weak ruler for a formidable challenge to defeating Balor or choose a strong ruler for a formidable challenge to defeating Balor.*
- *High Prestige makes everything easier.*
- *Low Prestige gives you a pain in the . . . well, you know.*

Chapter Three



Kindred, Free, and Villainous Champions

Three champion classes, or professions, coexist in Eire: warriors, druids, and bards. Warriors serve as the frontline combatants when the ruler endeavors to invade and take over rival provinces. The druids and bards are magicians with remarkable powers gained from years of intense study. They cast devastating spells that help the ruler in times of war and peace.

All Eire champions, even rulers, belong to one of these three primary classes. In addition, at the start of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil* Eye, the champions are further differentiated by three separate subcategories: kindred, wandering, and villainous.

Kindred, or loyal, champions ally with particular tribes. The rulers of certain tribes even entrust some of these followers with the heavy responsibility of governing the provinces in which they reside. Not even the greatest of rulers can be in two places at once.

Free, or wandering champions, are loyal to no particular tribe. Over 40 of these champions roam the Eire wilds, stopping by the hospitable Champion Tents located in every province. The warrior wanderers are fond of passing the time by challenging other province champions to a good old-fashioned sword fight. Druid wanderers teach magic spells that both they and the bards can cast. Bard wanderers speak of many treasures that the ruler may receive by gratifying Danu, the patron goddess of Eire.

Any of the wandering champions can be recruited by the province chief, whether or not that chief is the tribe's ruler. All wandering champions seem to stick to certain geographical areas of the Eire map. Gwnyver, for example, seems to always show up in Tara near the beginning of every game. Wanderers appear to visit coastal provinces less frequently than inland provinces.

The villainous, pillaging champions comprise the 14 members of the Fomor tribe, whose leader, Balor, graces the title of the game. At Balor's direction and delight, these brutes do little more than terrorize the provinces and the people of Eire. Every new year, Fomors celebrate by collecting taxes as tribute to Balor. This seriously depletes the resources of the province in which the ruler is residing. Play *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* with skill, and payback time will come.

Universal Champions

All of the characters in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* are champions, even the rulers. Rulers are elevated champions who have earned the maximum level of trust and loyalty from a tribe. Rising to the top of the tribal heap, rulers interact with lesser champions who either follow (kindred), visit (wanderers), or pillage (Fomors). Each champion is unique in body, mind, and outlook.

In a way, the champions portray "real" people. Many are based on Celtic legendary or historical characters who roamed Eire centuries ago. Each champion belongs to a distinct race. From towering giants to wee folk and faeries, champions reflect their native backgrounds. Some champions actually descended from the heavens.

From game to game, every champion retains the same attribute scores and other personal qualities. After several plays through *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*, you begin to instantly recognize and to develop an attachment to many of the more memorable, colorful, and powerful champions.

Once met, some of these characters are indelibly imprinted in your mind: Findabair, the quasi-albino; Morrigan, the permanently-winking phantom queen; Lugh, the stoic Lord British look-alike; Lludd, with scores of over 90 in all constant attributes; Skatha, the warrior queen, trainer of champions. The list goes on and on.

Watch out for names so similar they practically defy distinction. Both Bodb the Red and Badb the Fury are hearty, capable warriors. Bodb is a friendly wandering

champion, possibly available for recruitment. Conversely, Badb is the loyal, fanatical ally of Morrigan of the Findias tribe. You'll have to keep a clear head to distinguish between Gwgawn, Gwiawn, Gwrhyr, Gwyddno, Gwydion, Gwynn, and Gwnyver–all free, wandering champions.

Then, there are the Fomors. As distasteful as it may be mentioning these menaces in the same breath as the hero champions, Fomors are champions, nonetheless. Not only are they champions, they are powerful champions right from the very beginning of the game. Fomors require no laborious and thoughtful building of experience levels. They all start the game with an ability of 100, and none start below level 13.

Figure 3-1.
Finn, ruler of the Finnia, is a mighty warrior.

Constant Attributes

Arms, Dexterity, Mind, and Charm comprise the congenital attributes of Eire's champions. As such, they are permanent and, to a point, remain the same from game to game. These values can be increased by equipping, or carrying on the champion's person, the following:

- *Common items created in a Burg*
- *Famed items bestowed by the goddess Danu for exemplary ruler deeds*
- *The game's two treasured or prized items (Lia Fail and Gae Bolga)*

Chapter 8 details every item in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*, including the impact each has on these four champion attributes.

Arms

The Arms attribute provides the warrior's bread and butter. High scores in Arms guarantee the strike accuracy and effectiveness of the battle blows a warrior directs toward a rival champion. This attribute also measures the defensive capability of a champion in battle; the loftier the better.

At first blush, arms seem unimportant for bards and druids. Effective combat strategy normally calls for magicians to be sent well away from close infighting. At a distance, they cast devastating offensive and defensive spells. While this strategy makes sense, a ruler might select for battle a mage with more versatility. Merely because a mage is sent to the far corners of the battle map doesn't mean a rival warrior won't look for an easy kill. In that case, the mage may need a decent arms rating (and a good weapon) to fight back.

Mana, the resource needed to cast spells, is in exhaustible supply. When low or gone, the mage may rest on the battlefield. It is doubtful a rival warrior will allow a mage low on Mana to take a snooze when a few well-placed blows will add another notch to his sword.

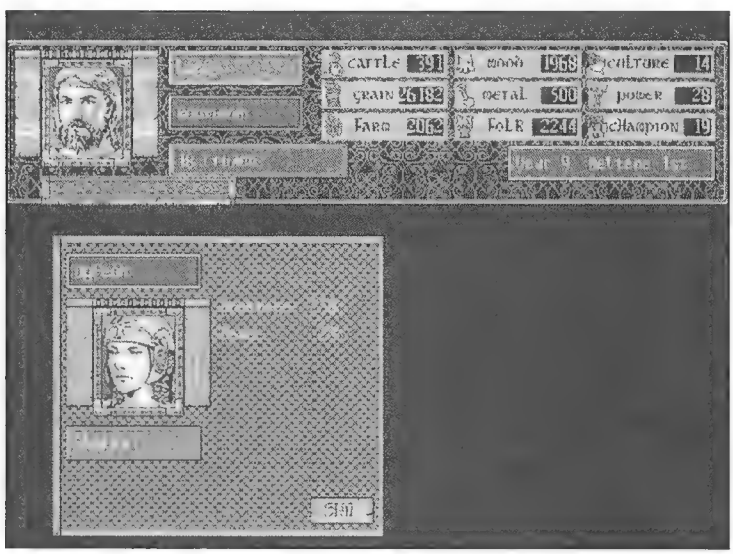


Figure 3-2.
Lugh and Skatha rule the Rodruban and Dyfedh tribes. Skatha is the greatest trainer of warriors in Eire.

Dexterity

High Dexterity is an absolute must for all Eire champions. Dexterity is the only constant attribute a ruler automatically considers when deciding when and where to send champions on any given turn. Dexterity influences the quality of a champion's performance, domestically and in war. A dexterous champion can dodge magic or take extra swings in the heat of battle. On the home front, farming and mining benefit from a champion with high Dexterity.

Champion warriors with elevated Dexterity, particularly in combination with great Arms skill, throw fear into the hearts of battlefield opponents. Their swords will deliver blows that are not only solid and true, but also fast and (pun intended) to the point.

Mind

Mind and its companion Charm are the champion attributes critical to Eire mages. Lofty scores in these attributes guarantee successful and efficient spellcasting. A spellcasting champion with a superior Mind rating increases the chances of a spell's potency. Weak-minded or low-level mages regularly blow spells due to sheer incompetence.

When selecting warriors for battle, the wise ruler can completely ignore the mind attribute. No Eire warrior has ever been known to increase battle skills with a mind of any distinction.

Charm

Charm is very important across the board for the effective champion. Its most important function is to grant champions performing diplomatic missions, whether warriors or mages, a superior chance of success. On all diplomatic missions, possessing high Charm increases the chance of achievement.

Back in the province, a province chief or ruler with great Charm finds greater success in trying to attract visits from recruitable wandering champions. Trading tasks also benefit from strength in this attribute.

Cream of the Crop

Balance is the true friend of any ruler in absolutely everything encountered in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*. The ruler's most important role in the game, bar none, consists of selecting champions who have the right combination of attributes for the important tasks at hand.

You might ask, "Why not simply work with champions high in all attributes, no matter what the class?" Unfortunately, very few champions, other than several of the rulers, excel in all attributes. Besides, one of the most interesting aspects of the game is sifting through the available champions, trying to calculate which one has the best chance for success on the next delicate assignment.

Changing Attributes

The attributes discussed below change on a regular basis. Every move a champion makes and every breath he or she takes cause some attribute to increase and another to decrease, accordingly. The amount of the increase or decrease depends entirely on what action the champion has performed.

Experience

Experience provides a significant measure of a champion's overall power. The higher a champion's experience level, the greater his or her chance of success is in virtually every action that can be taken by champions in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye.*

A champion can attain a maximum experience level of 15–with the exception of Balor, who is subject to no such constraints. He begins the game with an impressive level 16 in Experience, the only champion in the game capable of ever reaching that level.

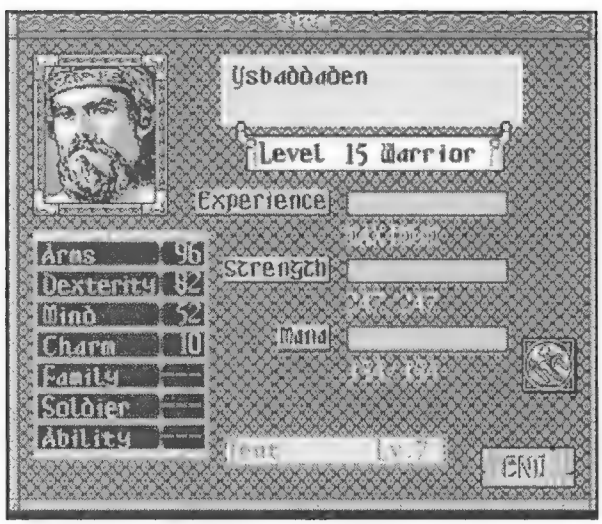


Figure 3-3.
Ysbaddaden is the only champion who starts the game with the maximum level of Experience.

If the ruler intends to wage war, recruit a wandering champion, or initiate some other activity in which Experience is especially important, determine whether the champion is close to receiving an increase in Experience. A month spent herding, mining building, or hurling might be all that's needed to put the champion over the top into a new level. Since higher levels mean a greater chance of the champion's next delicate assignment bearing fruit, assign the champion to those actions required to advance him to the higher level.

You should monitor the rises in the experience levels of all champions, but focus especially on the select group of champions that a ruler naturally relies on more

frequently. It stands to reason that a ruler's confidence in particular champions continually heightens with recurring successful missions. This is called the *Magnificent 7 Stratagem*. Consult Chapter 10 for details.

Table 3-1 shows that, as champions move up through the Experience ranks, each level milestone represents an increase of exactly 20 points. Analysis of the resultant Strength increases that occur with each advance in experience level reveals that all champions of a particular class have approximately the same Strength, regardless of any difference in constant or variable attributes.

Put another way, every level 11 warrior has between 200 and 220 Strength points; all level-five bards comes in at about 100 Strength points; and each level-nine druid falls within the range of 150 Strength points. The table also demonstrates that warriors lead in Strength points, followed by druids at 20 percent less, with bards falling slightly below the druids.

TABLE 3-1 Experience and Strength by Levels

Level	Pts/Level[1]	Estimated Strength Pts (selected levels)[2]		
		Bard	Druid	Warrior
3	140	54	60	83
4	160	78	81	–
5	180	98	111	165
6	200	–	–	112
7	220	–	–	–
8	240	–	–	–
9	260	128	–	165
10	280	–	–	–
11	300	–	–	–
12	320	–	–	–
13	340	–	–	–
14	360	–	–	211
15	380	195	220	245

LEGEND

1 Points needed to attain the adjacent level.
2 Arms and existing Strength affect the amount of Strength earned on reaching a new level.

To reach the maximum Level 15, the champion or ruler needs to earn over 3,000 Experience points. Assuming the ruler or champion does nothing but Farm, Mine, or Herd steers for 300 turns, you attain the top level in approximately 24 Eire years. I can't imagine any player taking this rather tedious approach. (Then again, I predicted that no one would purchase a machine to record movies and television programs!)

Taking a more entertaining and proactive approach to the game, rulers or champions who always carry out major accomplishments reach the maximum level much sooner. Actions such as successful tribute missions, province annexations, and good trade relations can each add up to 50 Experience points to a champion's score for each action taken. At that rate, you can reach the maximum level in about seven to 10 game years.

Strength

A champion's Strength relates directly to Experience. Strength limits rise with each new Experience level. Just about everything a champion does reduces Strength. Table 4-6 shows the reductions to Strength from certain actions a champion performs.

Mining rocks, herding cattle, or building a weapon, reduce Strength fairly insignificantly, in the seven-point range. Conversely, a vicious attack by a rival champion in battle may reduce huge amounts of a champion's Strength.

In combat situations, Strength is similar to the familiar term "hit points" in board games and computer fantasy role-playing games. *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* clearly qualifies as a role-playing game, because of the need to improve characters to higher levels in order to accomplish the game objective–namely, the utter destruction of Balor.

Soldiers

The number of soldiers a champion draws into battle with him depends on the province's power (Citadel level) and Charm. Several hundred soldiers is about the limit a single champion garners at any one time in a province. Only 100 soldiers can accompany their champion into a battle. During a battle, soldiers add significant weight to the damage inflicted by their champion.

As soldiers are killed in battle, the champion's effectiveness in close-in fighting decreases in direct relation to the number of soldiers remaining. When all soldiers are gone, the champion must rely on his or her personal attributes to carry on the combat. Mages with the Raise Army spell can replenish all of the champion's soldiers lost in battle.

Wandering champions commence the game with no soldiers. Once recruited and allied with a tribe, hopefully yours, these champions begin to accumulate soldiers, just like any champion with kindred status at the beginning of the game.

Figure 3-4.
Curoi, ruler of the treacherous Tir Tairn tribe.

Family

Family represents not only the champion's traditional relations or kinfolk, but the many province folk who assist the champion when needed. Family is directly affected by the province's Culture (Burg level) and Charm.

The larger the champion's family is, the higher the morale of the champion and his or her soldiers. Morale is very important, particularly in battle. Morale can be increased during battle to compensate for a low Family score. However, that's a waste of good Mana. Preferably, Morale should be taken care of on the home front.

Ability

Every right and true champion in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* begins the game with an Ability of 50. You've probably guessed that Balor and his 13 minions start higher, which is a gross understatement. The Fomors all start the game at the maximum for this attribute, a whopping 100.

Ability profoundly affects close-in fighting during combat and the ability to avoid a mage's well-aimed magic spells. No item common, famed, or prized can change this attribute. Rather, Ability rises as the champion performs tasks that increase the Morale of the soldiers. In combat, a spell can help a champion who may have been neglectful in the morale department.

Ability rises when the ruler does something morale-intensive. For example, Ability rises by about 10 points when the ruler grants grain to folk celebrating certain annual festivals. Being stingy with grain and not permitting the celebration to go on causes a sharp drop in Ability, as much as 15 points. Losing a war results in a three- to five-point reduction in this attribute. Retreating in battle lowers the Morale as well as the Ability of all champions taking that action.

Upward increases in Ability resulting from a bard's Spell of Encourage or from a druid's Spell to Increase Morale in combat are permanent.

Folk

Folk simply designates the number of inhabitants in the province. The more, the merrier. Folk rarely decreases drastically, except when a battle occurs in their home province. This attribute increases slightly, about 3 to 4 percent, every turn. Obviously, a Folk rise becomes much more drastic when a tribe annexes provinces.

On very rare occasions, a nomadic group of Eire inhabitants ask a province chief for shelter and asylum, which also adds to the Folk attribute.

Figure 3-5.
Hevydd the Ancient–a powerful bard.

Runes

Chapter 9 reviews all the important available material on the wooden and stone runes. These materials permit mages to cast spells in combat or domestically at the province level.

Items

Champions can equip, wear, or carry one single item–no more and definitely, no less. Your item score, then, is either one or zero. Try to alter a zero rating as quickly as possible. Head for the local Burg. Create an item from scratch, using the proper raw materials. Or be forceful, go to war, and retrieve items from defeated province chiefs and treasuries. Try to enlist champions with the Form skill to make items. This skill cuts in half the amount of valuable province resources needed to create an item. Early in the game, a champion with the Form skill proves an extremely important asset.

Strictly speaking, an item does not constitute an attribute, but it comes close, because items directly affect constant attribute scores. Take the Lia Fail, for example. Equipping a champion with this symbol of the High Ruler improves all four constant attributes by 20–a powerful item, indeed! The only common item that strengthens more than one attribute is the Dagger, which increases both Arms and Mind by 10 points.

Chapter 8 provides the complete scoop on game items.

Skills

Using and recruiting champions having any of the 16 available skills is vital to victory in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*. This champion asset enhances, to a great degree, certain game actions a champion performs.

A champion with the skill of Heroism hits a rival champion much harder than a champion without that skill. In battle, mages with the Nature skill heal all friendly champions faster and more effectively than the unskilled mage. Champions possessing the Parley skill expertly negotiate deals with rival rulers and province chiefs.

Certain champions are lucky enough to be born with skills, the so-called inborn skills. Lugh is born into Eire with the valuable Form skill that, as mentioned above, halves the amount of Wood and Metal needed to create common items in a province Burg.

Acquired skills are earned, but exactly when this occurs for a particular champion cannot be reduced to a specific, mathematical formula. If a champion herds cattle for three straight years, or 39 turns, the chances are excellent that the Animal skill will be earned before the champion collapses from the smell. The same goes for almost any of the available actions taken by a champion.

A worthy approach is to turn specific champions into domestic specialists. Direct each champion to do only one particular task when he's not resting.

Judicious rulers should obviously consider skills when selecting the right champion for the job. Careful consideration of the skills champions possess goes a long way toward shortening your path to High Ruler.

Send an envoy with the Politics skill to ally that pesky province, and your chances of a resultant alliance increases by a third. On the domestic front, chop more wood, farm more land, herd more cattle, and mine more ore with the Elements skill. An exploring champion with the Stealth skill cuts in half the time required for the mission.

Consult Table 3-2 to learn how skills enhance the various actions a ruler can assign. Recruiting only skilled champions gives your ruler a significant advantage over the others.

TABLE 3-2 Skill Effects of Champion Actions

Skill		Chance of Success[3]	End Result[4]
Inborn[1]	**Acquired[2]**		
Nature	–	Vitality+10	Spells and Rest+10
–	Vitality	–	Rest+5
–	Spells	Magic+5	Magic+5
Elements	–	–	Farm, Chop, Mine, and Herd+10
–	Land	–	Farm+5
–	Animal	–	Herd+5
Form		Ensures Champion Can Create	Build+10, Time - 1/2
–	Masonry	Arms+10	Build+5
–	Crafts	Arms+10	Required Materials - 1/2
Parley	–	Oath, Support, Messenger, and Caravan+10	–
–	Politics	Oath, Support, and Messenger+10	–
–	Barter	Caravan+5	–
Heroism		–	Attack and Defense+1 1/2 Required Explore Time - 1/2 Mine and Chop+10
–	Might	–	Mine and Chop+10
–	Stealth	–	Required Explore Time - 1/2

LEGEND

1. Inborn skills are present from the start and cannot be earned during the game under any circumstances.
2. Acquired skills may be earned through sustained, successful command performance.
3. Mathematical factor thrown into the game program's formula that calculates the results of champion actions.
4. Actual consequence of performing the command with the specific skill.

However long it takes, the acquisition of a skill by a ruler's champion is to be greeted with unbound rapture. Table 3-3 shows all the champions lucky enough to own inborn skills at the beginning of the game. Five of these lucky champions are wanderers. Continually check your province Champion Tents. When these hot shots show up, send your best charmer to attempt recruitment.

TABLE 3-3 Champions With Inborn Skills

Name	Tribe	Skill
Indech	Fomor	Heroism
Finnegas	Fianna	Parley
Lugh	Rodruban	Form
Goibhniu	Airceltrai	Form
Cathbadh	Sligo	Nature
Cuchulainn	Eas Aedha	Heroism
Nuada	Meadhe	Heroism
Senchan	Cnoc Aine	Parley
Calatin	Bri Leith	Nature
Skatha	Dyfedh	Heroism
Daghda	Meadhe	Heroism
Pwyll	Tir Tairn	Heroism
Sinnan Og	Falias	Elements
Eisirt	Aes Sidhe	Nature
Ceridwen	Free	Nature
Lludd	Free	Form
Ysbaddaden	Free	Herosim
Gwrhyr	Free	Parley
Menw	Free	Nature

Champions of Eire

The following tables provide comprehensive data and comments on most of the 144 non-Fomor champions in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye.* (For those wishing the low-down on the Fomors, refer to Chapter 10.) Use these tables for ready reference. Make a copy for notes and easy access to all you ever wanted or needed to know about Eire's finest heroes.

Table 3-4 (see page 26) consists of pertinent legend information and remarks common to some of the ensuing tables.

TABLE 3-4 Legend and Remarks for Champions

Caretaker	Holder of one of the 12 Stone Runes
Chmp	Champion. The number of champions
Class Dominance	Profile of ruler's starting champion class mix
Class	Champion's profession (bard, druid, or warrior)
Culture and Power	Barometers of province vigor
Dex	Dexterity
Lvl or Level	Experience level
Prestige	Ruler's overall power
Prov	Province(s)
Str	Strength

- Every non-Fomor champion begins the game with an Ability of 50.
- Experience of individual champions varies when the game starts.

Table 3-5 covers all of the champions who wander freely. You should keep this table close, because it will frequently come in handy. Experience, Strength, and Mana scores are not included, as these attributes seem to be consistent by class for all champions.

TABLE 3-5 Wandering Champions[1]

Name	Level[2]	Class[3]	Arms	Dexterity	Mind	Charm	Skill[4]
Adna	13	B	62	36	55	27	–
Aillell	9	W	87	64	49	41	–
Arawn	12	W	80	53	22	45	–
Blodeuwedd	7	B	45	60	50	50	Land
Bodb	9	W	91	46	31	55	–
Bricriu	11	W	91	46	31	55	–
Caradawg	11	D	30	95	95	83	–
Ceridwen	15	D	28	74	99	84	Nature
Coibhniu	2	W	73	98	25	46	Form
Conall	6	W	81	59	47	65	–
Conglinne	9	B	50	34	49	30	–
Creidhne	7	B	32	92	80	48	Crafts
Cyfan	5	W	80	22	29	15	–
Cynddilyd	10	B	63	91	71	81	–
Deirdre	8	W	76	70	30	72	–

(Continued on page 27)

TABLE 3-5 Wandering Champions[1] (Continued from page 26)

Name	Level[2]	Class[3]	Arms	Dexterity	Mind	Charm	Skill[4]
Eisirt	5	B	44	89	56	58	Nature
Fedelma	3	D	20	45	88	48	–
Fercheirtue	6	B	61	24	67	84	–
Fiacha	3	W	85	86	24	52	–
Gwgawn	5	W	83	32	32	44	–
Gwiawn	9	B	41	23	55	55	–
Gwrhyr	9	B	68	53	84	78	Parley
Gwyddno	6	W	80	48	31	44	–
Gwydion	10	D	25	93	94	85	–
Gwynn	7	W	82	21	34	12	–
Gwnyver	3	W	81	83	24	68	–
Levan	10	W	83	32	32	44	–
Lleflys	12	D	40	96	97	80	–
Lludd	1	W	97	98	96	95	Form
Luchta	5	B	33	89	79	46	Crafts
Madawg	10	W	91	30	35	85	–
Maelgwn	8	W	82	45	35	23	–
Menw	11	D	39	97	96	79	Nature
Mesgegra	8	W	81	69	41	29	–
Myddawg	12	W	93	26	39	36	–
Olwen	8	D	34	41	84	21	–
Peblig	11	W	86	50	21	43	–
Peredur	7	W	86	59	7	76	–
Pyll	9	W	80	31	31	25	–
Red Hugh	10	W	86	76	24	33	Might
Rhiannon	9	D	21	67	91	40	–
Tristan	2	B	92	99	97	77	Nature
Twrch	6	W	80	77	27	38	–
Ysbaddaden	15	W	96	82	52	10	Heroism

LEGEND

1 Does not include Experience, Strength, or Mana
2 Experience level as the game opens
3 B=Bard; D=Druid; W=Warrior
4 Includes only inborn skills

Figure 3-6.
Angus Og, the young king.

The champions in Table 3-6 (see pages 28-31) all begin the game loyal to one of Eire's 18 non-Fomor rulers. Whenever a province is taken by force, any resident loyal champion may join the victor. This depends on many factors, which Chapter 6 covers in greater detail. Many splendid champions, including all 12 holders of the sacred stone runes, are devoted to a particular tribe and ruler when the game begins.

TABLE 3-6 Loyal Champions by Tribe

Name	Level	Class[1]	Arms	Dexterity	Mind	Charm	Inborn Skill
				Fionnaidh			
Balcu	2	B	58	81	60	51	–
Chakah	1	W	66	76	45	72	Might
Deirdre	8	W	76	70	30	73	–
Faun	3	D	20	55	87	71	–
Fec	2	B	54	75	64	59	–
Gwgawn	5	W	81	33	33	56	–
Sharvan	6	W	77	69	30	18	–
				Sligo			
Ainle	3	W	85	73	37	76	–
Bran	2	D	21	72	92	69	–
Caipre	8	B	49	67	72	79	–
Catabadh	2	D	19	86	90	22	Nature
Grainne	2	B	51	87	59	39	–
Gwawl	5	W	83	74	23	69	–

(Continued on page 29)

TABLE 3-6 Loyal Champions by Tribe (Continued from page 28)

Name	Level	Class[1]	Arms	Dexterity	Mind	Charm	Inborn Skill
				Findias			
Badb	2	W	83	83	17	11	–
Gaiar	3	B	57	57	57	24	–
Jullyl	3	D	19	79	91	62	–
Laegaire	5	W	82	80	22	31	–
Macha	2	W	69	35	26	87	–
				Falias			
Airmid	4	D	18	83	91	63	Vitality
Etain	2	D	17	28	92	67	–
Puk	2	B	37	54	73	80	–
				Rodruban			
Ferghus	6	B	61	24	67	84	Politics
Setven	3	B	6	24	67	84	–
				Fianna			
Caolite	2	D	31	67	78	34	–
Conan	2	B	60	51	47	53	–
Diarmuid	2	W	92	42	16	85	–
Finnegas	2	B	57	18	73	96	Parley
Goll	2	D	29	63	79	59	–
Oisin	2	W	94	62	20	28	–
Oscar	2	W	95	59	19	61	Might
Sadbh	2	W	89	80	18	47	Stealth
				Eas Aedha			
Aneirin	6	B	50	43	69	35	–
Llea	2	D	17	66	88	37	–
Miach	5	D	24	85	90	58	Spells
Owel	2	D	22	58	89	57	–
				Gorias			
Culioda	1	B	49	45	92	89	–
Fand	3	D	29	81	81	48	–
Fedlimid	7	B	53	62	84	36	Land
Keva	3	D	23	65	85	342	Spells
Krystyn	3	B	52	85	61	74	–
Usnach	3	W	80	84	26	58	–

(Continued on page 30)

TABLE 3-6 Loyal Champions by Tribe (Continued from page 29)

Name	Level	Class[1]	Arms	Dexterity	Mind	Charm	Inborn Skill
				Dyfedh			
Aideen	5	W	83	74	18	64	–
Burinne	8	W	82	72	28	42	–
Maga	7	D	16	82	89	54	–
Naoise	7	W	86	59	29	87	–
Nemhain	3	W	88	94	32	8	–
				Murias			
Brigit	3	D	19	65	93	14	–
Doirche	2	D	19	84	93	13	Spells
Figol	3	D	24	71	89	52	–
				Tir Tairn			
Brian	4	B	47	54	65	77	–
Fair Mane	7	D	24	80	82	41	Vitality
Hevydd	7	B	46	82	68	78	–
Mongan	2	D	20	72	82	51	–
Pwyll	8	W	89	77	30	58	Heroism
				Fer Sidhe			
Cliodne	3	D	16	71	74	70	–
Eber Scot	2	W	84	68	14	74	–
Emer	3	B	43	63	67	94	–
Evelake	2	B	56	68	43	68	–
Fotla	3	B	46	69	46	92	–
Jonath	3	W	78	74	16	66	Barter
Judyth	3	W	77	75	15	69	–
Onagh	3	D	15	29	76	72	–
				Meadhe			
Daghda	8	W	85	80	19	22	Heroism
Diancecht	1	D	19	76	88	47	–
Finola	3	W	76	86	34	51	–
Roc	5	W	83	63	29	37	–

(Continued on page 31)

TABLE 3-6 Loyal Champions by Tribe (Continued from page 30)

Name	Level	Class[1]	Arms	Dexterity	Mind	Charm	Inborn Skill
				Aes Sidhe			
Bebo	3	D	12	90	86	60	–
Cian	2	W	74	56	60	65	Vitality
Eber Scott	2	W	79	68	14	74	Might
Eisirt	5	B	44	89	56	58	Nature
Glower	3	W	74	88	27	58	–
				Airceltrai			
Fiacha	1	W	85	86	24	52	–
Goibhniu	2	W	73	98	25	46	Form
Ben mac Ben	5	B	55	75	60	83	Land
Geoff	3	W	74	49	28	75	–
Morgause	3	W	74	49	28	75	–
Luchta	5	B	33	89	79	47	Crafts
Uther Rych	6	W	65	25	48	86	–
				Sidhe Fuait			
Cowynn	2	D	24	67	72	63	–
Cymri	2	B	56	72	40	64	–
Darvyd	2	B	59	71	42	62	–
Karllyl	3	W	86	78	10	42	–
Vivionn	2	W	73	73	11	48	–
				Bri Leith			
Findabair	1	W	69	61	53	28	–
March Ben	2	B	46	81	60	59	Animal
Ross	3	W	84	71	34	87	Might
				Cnoc Aine			
Diorraing	1	D	27	57	81	19	–
Kai	3	W	85	86	22	37	–
Nivougi	5	W	84	47	22	38	–

LEGEND

1 W=Warrior; B=Bard; D=Druid

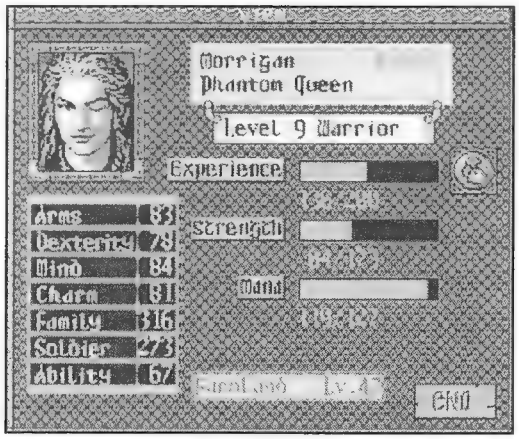


Figure 3-7.
Morrigan, Phantom Queen of the Permanent Wink

Table 3-7 reveals the constant attributes and inborn skills of all Eire rulers. Rulers are champions; as such, when conquered, they may join your tribe. Some are just plain stubborn and prefer exile to serving any other ruler. If any losing rulers adopt this stance, banish them, knowing you tried to enlist their aid.

TABLE 3-7 Eire's Rulers

Name	Tribe	Arms	Dexterity	Mind	Charm	Skill[1]
Angus Og	Airceltrai	48	76	88	83	–
Calatin	Bri Leith	36	67	98	79	Nature
Conchobar	Muria	67	87	57	70	Might
Cuchulainn	Eas Aedha	97	93	65	78	Heroism
Curoi	Tir Tairn	87	77	38	81	–
Finn	Fianna	97	81	76	89	–
Finvarra	Fer Sidhe	78	70	57	83	–
Ilbreach	Gorias	76	76	47	69	Land
Lubdan	Aes Sidhe	75	76	38	86	–
Lugh	Rodruban	94	79	72	93	Form
Manannan	Fionnaidh	67	84	72	80	–
Medb	Sligo	86	74	69	94	Nature
Morrigan	Findias	83	78	84	81	–
Nuada	Meadhe	85	52	32	92	Heroism
Senchan	Cnoc Aine	82	68	75	49	Parley
Sinnan Og	Falias	63	69	76	63	Elements
Skatha	Dyfedh	90	73	33	75	Heroism
Treon	Sidhe Fuait	88	17	38	86	–

LEGEND

1 Inborn skills only

After all is said and done, it's easy to pick the best and the brightest for the three champion classes. Table 3-8 presents my take on the five best champions in each class, according to constant attributes and my experience with the game. I have left the rulers out of these lists, because most already hold excellent, relatively high attributes, almost without exception. While some of my selections don't have the highest average scores for constant attributes, their performance over time seems to be the most consistent.

The highest ranking champion in the four constant attributes–Lludd, the wanderer druid–begins the game at level one. Find this complete package quickly. The thought of Lludd advancing at your ruler's side is a fine thought, indeed.

TABLE 3-8 Dream Teams

Name	Level[1]	Class[2]	Arms	Dexterity	Mind	Charm	Skill[3]
Warrior Dream Team							
Daghda	8	W	85	80	19	22	Heroism
Lludd	1	W	97	98	96	95	Form
Pwyll	8	W	89	77	30	58	Heroism
Ross	3	W	84	71	34	87	–
Ysbaddaden	15	W	96	82	52	10	Heroism
Bard Dream Team							
Creidhne	7	B	32	92	80	48	Crafts
Finnegas	2	B	57	18	73	96	Parley
Gwrhyr	9	B	68	53	84	78	–
Luchta	5	B	33	89	79	46	Crafts
Tristan	2	B	92	99	97	77	Nature
Druid Dream Team							
Caradawg	11	D	30	95	95	83	–
Ceridwen	15	D	28	74	99	84	Nature
Diancecht	10	D	19	76	88	47	–
Diorraing	1	D	27	57	81	19	–
Menw	11	D	39	97	96	79	Nature

LEGEND

1 Experience level as the game opens
2 B=Bard; D=Druid; W=Warrior
3 Lists only inborn skills

Many names of Eire champions are lengthened by nicknames or catchy descriptive phrases, in keeping with Celtic tradition and history. Most of these distinctions refer to a champion's profession, spare job, disposition, or special physical characteristic. Eire denizens couldn't help but remember many of these very distinctive nicknames.

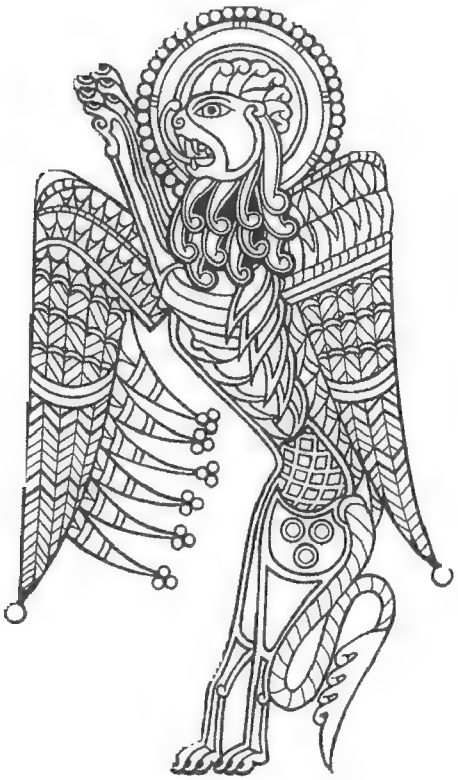
Diarmurid of the Love Spot identifies a facial imperfection, as if any one meeting this champion wouldn't notice. Who could forget the memorable Faun of the Mists or Morrigan, the Phantom Queen. What about these monikers:

- **Conan the Bald** *His name ends with one "n." He is not Conann, the evil King of Fomors, who is Balor's second in command.*
- **Keva of the White Skin**
- **Naoise of the Curly Locks**
- **Nuada of the Silver Hand** *Nuada is the powerful warrior-ruler of the Meadhe tribe.*
- **Lugh, Master of All Arts**
- **Calatin, the Enchanter**

The preceding tables name most, but not all, of Eire's champions. See if you can find those not mentioned. Use the handy New Discoveries table in the Appendix. If playing with multiple players, hold a contest to see who can find the most undiscovered champions. (Don't worry. The tables in this guide include all of the champions considered essential to win the game; no critical champion has been omitted.)

- *Champions make the ruler. No champions–no progress!*
- *The best warriors achieve high Strength and Dexterity marks.*
- *The best magicians are high in Charm and Mind.*
- *Every champion needs good Dexterity.*
- *Match skills to tasks.*
- *Acquired skills are just as good as inborn skills.*
- *Successful repetition of certain commands teaches skills to champions.*

Chapter Four



Province Affairs

To complete the game and unify Eire, the ruler must not ignore the basic geographical division of all tribes–the province. A big chunk of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* takes place in the country's provinces. Here, the ruler, or province chief, engages in the day-to-day operation of the provinces under a tribe's friendly dominion. Commands at the ruler's disposal essentially involve assigning champions to carry out work toward improving the province's economic, cultural, and defensive well-being.

The local Burg permits champions to build Common Items, such as sturdy weapons and other equipment, that improve the creator's physical and mental talent. From the Burg, the province chief launches trade missions via the provincial caravan. If the province chief can take the heat, the kind folk of the province can be polled to determine whether the chief is governing well. This is the departure point for champions

moving to other provinces, either those owned by the tribe or those that are empty and ripe for settlement.

An imposing Citadel serves as the province's seat of government. Inside this structure, the province chief tends to the affairs of state, or he or she may delegate the daily routine of governing other provinces to resident champions. The Treasury stores and allows access to all manner of items for champions wishing to boost their skills or even to trade items. Tribute missions can be handled here, so the ruler can begin the delicate process of establishing peace and eventual alliances with other tribes.

From the Citadel, you launch war at enemies that have fallen out of favor, or just because you want to. Drive competitors wild with raids on their cattle, probably the most precious commodity on the island. In a quiet corner of the Citadel, you'll find a small cubicle. The ruler uses this space to dismiss champions who do not carry their weight in the unification struggle. Balor does not tolerate incompetence, and neither should the ruler.

A lavishly-appointed Champion Tent completes the province skyline. This functions as the hospitality suite found in all Eire provinces. Wandering champions gravitate here to rest, eat, tell tales, teach magic, recite poems, challenge other champions to playful duels, consider the province chief's recruitment appeals, and just plain party. At the beginning of each month, you should check out the tent. If the front flap is pulled back, stop in and see what recruitable champions have paid a visit. The ruler can always use more champions!

The Tribal Council, tucked away in a secret part of every province to discourage the overly inquisitive, is always available to the ruler or province chief. Hand-picked by the ruler for this important duty, its four members dispense massive amounts of advice and information. A prudent ruler regularly visits the council and uses the knowledge gained to make command decisions.

One special word of caution when governing a province: The ruler or any resident champion may only target a single foreign province once in any one month. If a champion has been sent with tribute from Tara to Tralee, no other command by the current province or any other of the tribe's provinces can target Tralee until the next month–no war, no additional tribute, and no trading.

This also prevents you from launching multiple invasions against a strong province. If you want to slit your adviser's throat when he informs you that a certain province can not be invaded, remember this warning.

There are times when the province data indicates that five champions are in the province, but you see less than that number on the screen. Use the compass dial at the lower left hand portion of the Province screen to find the "missing" champions. This permits the ruler or province chief to scan the far reaches of the province in any direction.

Another reason a champion may be missing from the screen is that the champion is creating an item in the Burg. To ascertain this, use the convenient mouse-scan ability. If you let the mouse come to rest atop the Burg, the status scroll in the lower right-hand corner of the Province screen displays how many, if any, champions are in the Burg creating items.

Province Screen

This screen contains a very valuable scan feature available to the ruler or province chief. A simple right-click on the ruler's mouse or a click on the tool palette's eye allows you to observe the whole province and a wealth of useful and critical information. Details of every champion, building, structure, or province terrain (even down to the terrain's hardness level) is dispensed to the player by left-clicking the mouse anywhere on the dimmed screen. This action deactivates all other tool palette commands.

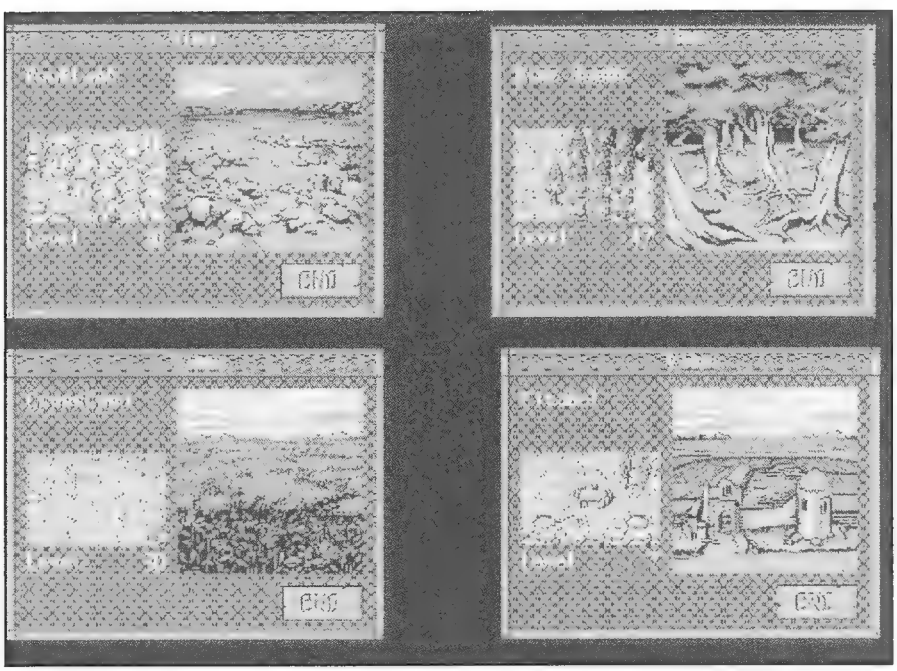


Figure 4-1.
Province Terrain by Type and Level.

The Province screen, as shown in Figure 4-1, contains especially important pieces of information that provide insight into the well-being of the province. As each new month arrives, regularly consult the Province screen. Problem areas that may need improvement and updates from the prior month usually form the ruler's springboard for determining the actions to be taken during the current month.

Table 4-1 defines each category of data on the Province screen and explains each category's significance. Each category comprises a number that can rise or fall, depending on the commands carried out by province champions in the prior month.

TABLE 4-1 Province Data Explanation and Remarks

Category	Uses	Remarks
Cattle	Tribute, Trade, and Free Champion Services	Bard Spell Adds
Grain	Tribute, Trade, and Supply Invading Soldiers	Bard Spell Adds
Farm	Quality of Province Farmland	Bard Spell Improves
Wood	Tribute, Trade, and Build Burg, Citadel, and Items	Bard Spell Adds
Metal	Tribute, Trade, and Build Burg, Citadel, and Items	–
Folk	Population	Increases Gradually
Culture	Level of Burg	47 Maximum
Power	Level of Citadel	47 Maximum
Champion	Movers and Shakers of the Province	No Limits

Culture and Power deserve special comment. These ratings accurately measure the potency of every province in Eire.

Culture reflects the overall vigor of the province. Topping out at level 47, a high province rating practically guarantees that recruitable wandering champions will show up at the province each month. Culture also measures the fitness of the province's economy. Increases in Culture augment the family rating of all resident champions.

Power measures the ability to defend the province. As the power level rises, more soldiers flock to the side of champions.

What goes up must come down, as Table 4-2 demonstrates. Every action taken by a player in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* results in ups and corresponding downs. For every action, there is a reaction; and for every positive a negative. Never forget this, for it provides the key to victory.

TABLE 4-2 Province Ups and Downs

Staple	Ups	Downs
Power	Build	None
Culture	Build	None
Farm	Farm, Magic	Fomor Fires and Water Spouts
Cattle	Magic, Caravan	Fomor Tax or Raid, Sickness, Caravan, Cattle Raid
Metal	Mine, Tribute, Caravan	Fomor Tax or Raid, Build, Create, Caravan, Tribute
Grain	Farm, Tribute, Caravan	Fomor Tax or Raid, Tribute, Caravan
Wood	Chop, Tribute, Caravan	Fomor Tax or Raid, Create, Build, Tribute, Caravan

Province Commands

The Province tool palette provides the ruler or province chief with the means to issue commands to resident champions for all controlled provinces at the beginning of each game month.

This section defines all available commands a ruler can make. It also describes the advantages and disadvantages to every action assigned to and taken by a champion. For example, when a champion builds up the Citadel, Experience increases (the advantage), but Family and Strength decrease. A later chart indicates which specific champion skills (both Inborn and Acquired) enhance performance of commands, as well as which skills can be earned upon the continued successful application of commands.

General

Those who give champions duties to perform should understand one simple rule: The higher the champion's level, the better the champion performs the task. As previously mentioned, certain skills enhance based on the champion's performance of related commands. Additionally, the champion's successful continued completion of some commands might result in the acquisition of a new potential skill.

Table 4-3 specifies the appropriate skill that can be elevated or acquired for each command a champion can be assigned by a ruler. The *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* manual presents this information, along with the explanation for each command. This table expands on that by putting all the information in one place. If a command is not on the chart, no elevating or potential skills apply.

All physical commands cause an increase of 15 to 25 points in Experience and a corresponding decrease in Strength of varying degrees, usually in the seven- to 10-point range. Rest increases Strength, whether received at home in a province or in battle. The battle command Defend also increases Strength. Any special attributes or data factors affected by a command are indicated below.

WARNING: Keep in mind that the algorithms used to determine the results of the champions' performance of commands in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* purposely inject randomness and mystery into the game.

Some skills assist the champion in several areas. The attribute Might can improve a month's mining production and always provides benefit when the champion swings that mighty sword or thrusts the pointy-edged javelin.

TABLE 4-3 Elevating and Potential Skills by Province Command

Command	Elevating Skill(s)	Potential Skill
	Outdoor Commands	
Farm	Elements, Land	Land
Herd Cattle	Heroism, Might	Might
Chop Wood	Heroism, Might	Might
Mine Rock	Heroism, Might	Might
Magic	Nature	Spells
Hurling	None	Might
Explore	None	None
Build Burg	Form, Masonry	Masonry
Build Citadel	Form, Masonry	Masonry
Rest	Nature, Vitality	None
	Citadel	
Delegate	Parley, Politics	None
Cattle Raid	Heroism, Stealth	Stealth
Recommend	Parley, Politics	Politics
Tribute	Parley, Politics	Politics
War	Heroism, Stealth, Might	Might
	Burg	
Create	Form, Crafts	Crafts
Trade	Parley	Barter
Move	None	None

Farm

Farming is an admirable and familiar task for a champion. All champions–for that matter, anyone born in Eire–works with the land while growing up. The unskilled champion farmer may eventually attain Land, an acquired skill that increases future farming productivity.

When farming, as well as when mining, make sure to not deplete the valuable resources of the province. Unless absolutely necessary, never farm at terrain levels less than 10. (The status window on the Province screen always shows the terrain level of every square inch of province land, as the mouse moves about the screen.) Lower-level farmland yields less anyway, so concentrate on farming the more difficult but high-yield land. If the ruler does this, the entire game can be completed without any provinces running out of valuable resources.

The amount of grain the province stockpiles for domestic consumption, foreign tribute, trade, and war relates directly to the quality of the farmland, which in turn, results from fruitful performance of this command. Champions assigned to farming continue to do so in the direction indicated until they require rest or are assigned another task.

Herd Cattle

Cattle may well be the most valuable resource in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye.* Effectively herding these cherished animals creates some golden opportunities to progress in the game. Valuable information and magic spells of visiting champions can only be obtained by payment in cattle.

In the Champion Tent, the province chief with plenty of cattle can learn magic spells (15 head per spell), hear tales of the treasured and prized items (10 head per item description), and enjoy poignant poems by bards of note (20 head per sonnet). Cattle are one of three commodities a province can always trade or use as Tribute value to rival rulers.

Chop Wood

Eire's forests supply one of the two essential resources used to build up a province's Burg and Citadel to more powerful levels. Another important function of this commodity is that it allows a champion to enter a Burg and to create the necessary common items champions need for weapons and other articles that raise flexible attributes. The depletion warning stated earlier applies equally to the forests of a province.

Mine

Like the wood resulting from vigorous chopping, building the Burg and the Citadel, as well as fabricating items requires mining the province's rock piles. The ore produced from mining is converted to precious metal that can be traded or offered in Tribute.

As with Farming and Forestry, take steps to not exhaust a province's Metal supply. There may come a time when certain provinces are called upon by the ruler to increase the stocks of critical provinces. If a province's resources are depleted, that effort easily draws a very large goose egg.

The bigger the province's rock piles, the more productive a month's Mining. Of course, a champion with the skills of Heroism or Might easily produces more ore per month than the unskilled.

Magic (Druids and Bards Only)

Magic from druids and bards is essential to the flourishing ruler to prop up the domestic capability of any particular province or to eliminate damage done by the Fomor raids. Two sets of four robust spells are available to both druids and bards from the Province screen.

Table 4-4 details the druid's domestic spells.

TABLE 4-4 Druid Province Spells

Spell	Rune Mix[1]	Element	Payoff
Heal	3, 1, Any	Water	Restores Strength to a Single Champion
Extinguish	2, 1, Any	Water	Snuffs Out Fires Set by Fomors
Transfer Mana	1, 2, Any	Earth	To Another Champion in the Province
Plant	4, 4, 4	Earth	Increases Tree Growth

LEGEND

1 Using the rune tablet as a guide, select the top row rune, then the middle row rune, and finally the bottom row rune.

Druid spells greatly enhance the province or, in the case of Transfer Mana, a fellow magician. For example:

- *The proficient druid may restore strength to any champion resident in the province with the Heal spell. This becomes especially useful just after Strength-sapping tough combats or domestic tasks that last several months in a row. Low Strength proves the bane of the province's safety and security.*
- *When a druid wishes to transfer personal Mana to another champion by casting the Transfer Mana spell, make sure the giver is positioned directly next to the receiver.*
- *Druids wishing to plant vegetation can cast the spell only on the ground directly adjacent to the druid's location. To plant at a location other than the current one, move the druid to the exact spot in the province where the enhanced planting should take place.*
- *The Extinguish spell goes a long way to lighten the damaging fires set during those infernal Fomor raids. The spell must be cast in the month the fires were started. If cast the following month, the damage caused by the Fomors cannot be reduced.*

Table 4-5 is a page out of the spell book of the Chief Bard of Eire, Senchan.

TABLE 4-5 Bard Province Spells

Spell	Rune Mix[1]	Element	Payoff
Encourage	3, 4, Any	Air	Raises Ability of all Province Champions
Farm	2, 1, Any	Fiery	New Land Growth
Cattle Births	1, 2, 4	Air	Cattle Liaisons Increase for a Month
Up Population	3, 3, 4	Fiery	Enlarges the Number of Folk in a Province

LEGEND

1 Using the rune tablet as a guide, select the top row rune, then the middle row rune, and finally the bottom row rune.

A bard can strengthen the province in as many as four ways. Some of the effects of casting these spells are interesting.

- *Up Population increases the folk level for the affected province by approximately 70 individuals or 3 to 5 percent, give or take.*
- *Cattle Births bring louder and longer mooing, particularly at night, from the additional 20 new steers brought forth into the province's herd by this spell.*
- *Encourage automatically raises the ability of every champion in the province by two. Cast this spell at the beginning of the month, before any champions are sent on assignments to foreign provinces. That way, all champions benefit from the Ability upgrade. Those who have crossed the border before the spell is cast miss out on the spell's benefits.*
- *Farm should be cast when the province is very low on grain, primarily when the province chief or ruler decides to engage in military actions. Large amounts of grain are needed to feed the combatant champions.*

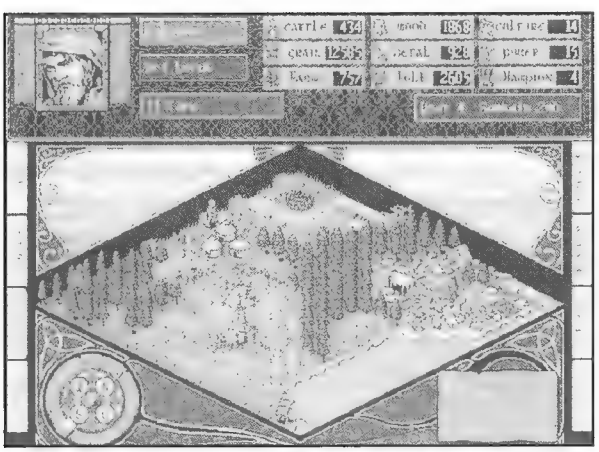


Figure 4-2.
Casting the land spell brings forth the Land Fairy to improve the farmland.

As I've repeated over and again, tasks in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* are better performed by champions with higher experience levels. The lower the champion's experience, the greater the chance the given task will not be performed well or performed at all. Therefore to be on the safe side, permit only mages with greater experience to cast domestic spells. The higher-level mages also expend less Mana when casting the spells.

Speaking of Mana, mages must take care to not waste Mana by indiscriminately casting domestic spells. Sneak attacks from rival rulers are always possible, and the mages play a large part in protecting the home provinces. A mage with no Mana may not have a chance to rest and replenish before a rival warrior lowers the boom.

Casting a domestic spell expends the mage's turn. No other action can be performed by the mage during that month.

Hurling

Hurling, a sports endeavor, is serious business in Eire. Each province has a championship team that competes in the national tournament held during the season of Imbolc every fourth year. The winning province gets bragging rights for four years. Several wars have been initiated because of disputes over the outcome of hotly contested games.

Hurling heightens the champion's experience and nothing more. This is the perfect command to use when a champion is very close to a level rise. A hearty game of hurling with some good chums really gets the blood boiling.

When you select this command, you can't help but notice the rather raucous sounds entailed in a game of hurling. It might sound totally out of control. The faint of heart might want to pass on this method of raising a champion's experience.

Explore

Forty-one provinces comprise Eire, but only 40 can be explored. Balor's home province of Tory Island doesn't really constitute an ordinary province, anyway. So, what difference does it make? The ruler already has an inkling of what's there. At any rate, Balor's home is completely off limits until the very last month of the game. Believe me, when the ruler first lays eyes on Tory Island, exploring is the last thing on the ruler's mind.

Without champions exploring Eire's countryside, the ruler spends the entire game in the starting province(s). While this may hold some vague interest to a few players, somehow this defeats the ruler's sworn purpose to become High Ruler of Eire, driving Balor and the heinous Fomors from the island in shame–or in a large wooden, decorated box.

Champions can explore other provinces, even provinces controlled by rival champions. No skills impact this command, nor can any be earned from a champion's continual exploration. Tribeless or empty provinces almost always border on the domain of any ruler you choose to play *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye.*

When the exploring champion returns, a host of commands involving the now-exposed province open up to the province chief or the ruler. These commands are accessible from the Burg (Caravan) and the Citadel (Tribute, Recommend, Cattle Raid, and War). In all likelihood, only the ruler will have sufficient skills and attribute levels to conduct the important trade, tribute, and war duties early in the game. Consider confining the ruler's activities to these duties.

If a ruler is sent far off to explore foreign provinces, even though this takes only two months, no substitute can delegate or recommend commands on behalf of the tribe in his or her absence. Only when the ruler returns can the tribe benefit from these two significant functions.

Keep this in mind before sending the ruler off on exploration. Any champion, regardless of attributes or skills, can perform this simple task. Although a stealth-skilled champion cuts down the exploration time, as a rule, keep the ruler at home. A more proficient method is to always keep the ruler available in a province, except for the most delicate of missions.

Which Way Is Up?

The ruler needs to decide on the general direction of the expansion. The various directional theories bring different pros and cons. In *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*, most initial successful unification efforts practice the so-called "stick close to home" or "dropped pebble" theory. This type of expansion calls for taking over provinces surrounding the home province. When the ring is complete, all of Eire belongs to your ruler.

Envision the pattern made by a pebble dropped into water. That's exactly what the expansion direction looks like in the above scenario. This expansion technique works best when the home province is located in the geographical center of Eire.

Another worthy expansion approach is appropriate when the home province is situated along any coastal border of Eire. In this case, expand in an ever-widening outward pattern. Expanding at a steady pace in a single direction is far preferable. To visualize this method, imagine the radiating spokes of a wheel. With the ocean guarding one entire side of your domain, you can expand power outward without getting caught in multi-front war possibilities. See Chapter 10's discussion of the famous Celtic Rim Theory.

The worst expansion direction to take is a straight line away from the home province. Even if successful, any break in the chain's link cuts a gap between the tribe's provinces, leaving nowhere to retreat in the event of an attack.

This straight-line directional expansion has another major shortcoming in that it increases by several times the number of your tribe's province borders exposed to rival rulers. Enemies will surely take advantage of this and come at your tribe from all directions.

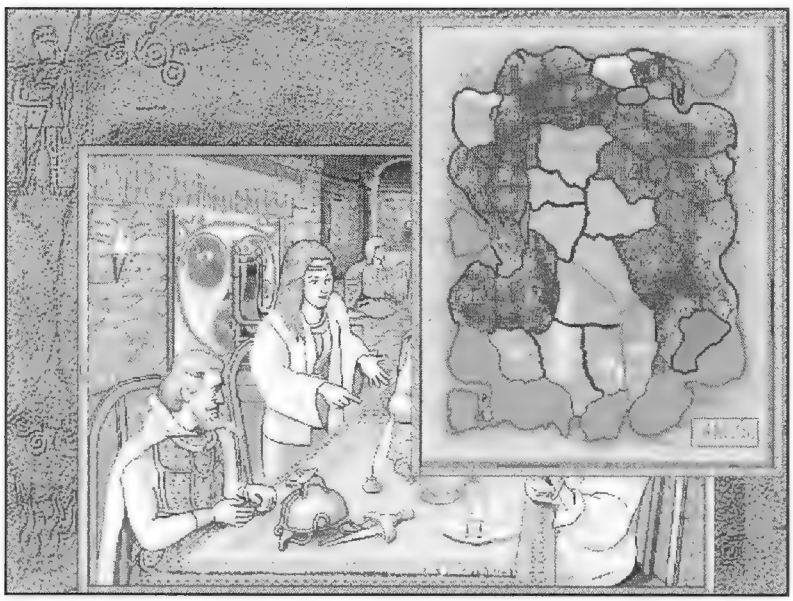


Figure 4-3.
Losing any middle provinces places the tribe at a great disadvantage.

Exploration is absolutely vital to the ruler, whether militarily or diplomatically inclined. Have you ever noticed how, after discovering a neighboring province through exploration and a few turns go by, the adviser relates that the explored province cannot be attacked or visited? This is due to the fact that once a province has been discovered by a champion explorer, its availability for interaction is lost, unless something is done within one turn.

The one exception is when a sufficient peace level has been reached. When the ruler of a province has a peace level of over 20, that province remains available for your ruler to interact with. See Chapter 7 for more on Peace.

Let's assume the province chief dispatches a champion explorer to the north of the active province. When the intended direction is dimmed and all other direction slots are empty and seemingly unavailable for exploration, a ruler might think no further exploration is possible on that turn. Just to make sure that's the case, the ruler wishing to explore in as wide a pattern as possible should select another champion for exploration. Do not be surprised if another explorer can be sent to the north. This results from Eire's geographical makeup, which often assigns certain provinces multiple relative directions to other provinces.

If one of your provinces is headed by a solitary champion, the Explore command is unavailable. The game requires that at least one champion remain to run a province. However, provinces can be abandoned by using the Move command in the Burg, so long as the province is not the only one remaining in the tribe. If so, the only way a lone ruler can explore a province is if you move from the Burg to an unsettled, empty province.

A final note on this command. The information obtained from exploration combined with the observations of talking with wandering champions gives the ruler vital intelligence on the competition. Given the ebb and flow of events in Eire, a particular tribe can be king of the hill one month and eradicated the next. The ruler should always monitor the tribe possessing the most territory and champions. That is the tribe that should be dealt with as soon as possible.

Build Burg

When a champion spends a month building up the Burg, it rapidly boosts the province's extremely important level of Culture. Once the province's Culture reaches 47, the maximum level allowed, no further building of the province's Burg by any champion is allowed.

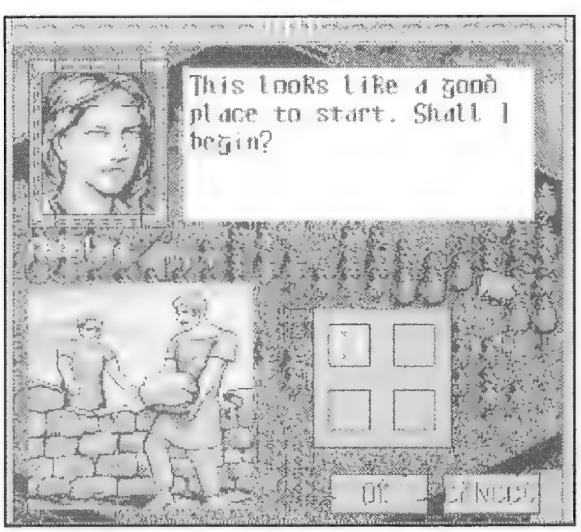


Figure 4-4.
Fedelma builds in a northerly direction.

More than one champion can perform this command in any one month. In fact, as long as there is room on any side of the Burg, a champion can pitch in with others, constructing from different directions. A quick way to increase Culture is to assign three or four champions several months of doing nothing but developing the Burg. You will attain level 47 in a few game years. Remember, use champions with the masonry or form skill to build up the Burg.

Build Citadel

Everything related to building the Burg, including the elevating skills, applies equally to building the Citadel. The only difference is that a high Citadel rating increases the province's power, which is the defense rating for the province.

Rest

As Strength levels diminish during the game, all champions absolutely require Rest. A province protected by champions with low Strength is susceptible to many inherent dangers. Just as you research the surrounding tribes, looking for weak spots, so, too, do those rulers survey you. Many of your rivals will not hesitate to raid a weakened province.

Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye forces champions to obtain needed Rest, allowing no additional performance of commands until the champion has recovered sufficient Strength. This may take more than one month. So, not only are you open to attacks from rival rulers, but the province can not progress in any way until you remedy the Strength deficiency with this command.

If every champion in the province is resting, the province becomes especially vulnerable to incursions from neighboring tribes. The wake-up call is daunting.

Citadel

The ruler of the tribe or the delegated province chief governs the province from the Citadel. A description of each of these governing activities follows.

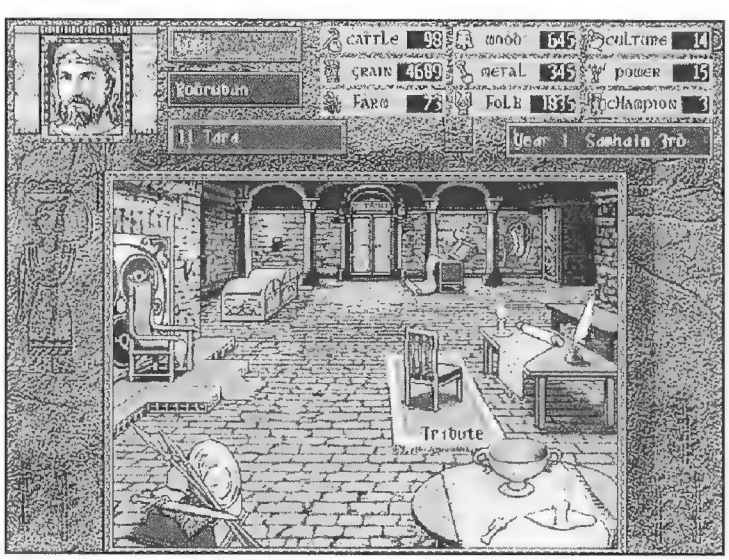


Figure 4-5.
Lugh governs the Rodruban tribe from Tara's Citadel.

Delegate

Only the ruler can delegate the day-to-day running of individual provinces to a province chief-in-residence. When the ruler delegates authority, the chief tasked with these new duties makes every effort to strengthen and to maintain the province's resources. The

chief does not recruit any wandering champions nor embark on any invasions. Make sure the new province chief has as many resource skills as possible.

Regularly monitor the progress of provinces to which delegation authority has been granted. As the saying goes, "Out of sight, out of mind!" If resources of a province not under delegated control becomes low, quickly shuttle some champions to retrieve a delegated province's bounty. If you have an ample amount of champions, think about leaving two of them in a province. That way, when the delegated province's goods are needed at the front, you don't have to send an envoy to pick up the goods, saving one-way travel time.

Without delegation, over the long run, as your domain expands into the far reaches of Eire, your ruler might have to make over 20 moves in a single turn. In this case, use the Delegate command but only on provinces of secondary importance.

When a rival ruler invades a province to which a delegate chief has been assigned, always handle the battle yourself. Enter the fray and determine whether there is any hope of victory–like, the invading battle chief is low on Strength. While this is unlikely, at least it gives you a better chance of overcoming the invaders than just letting the computer handle the war.

Cattle Raid

The Cattle Raid command sends champions into a designated province for the sole purpose of "borrowing" some cattle. If the raid succeeds, not only does the raiding province's cattle level rise, but the violated province's ruler goes through the roof! A failed raid does little more than embarrass the participants. There is no drop in Prestige from a cattle raid gone sour.

You can play an entire game of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* and never conduct a cattle raid. Save this for when you absolutely need a few extra head of cattle or you don't have the Strength to launch a full-scale invasion at a neighbor but want to build up some needed Experience. Or raid just to annoy an obnoxious neighbor.

Recommend

This command, executable only by a ruler, sends an emissary to a province with which a reasonable peace level has been achieved. This is the only way your ruler can garner secondary tribes–a tribe status that must be attained before oaths and complete allegiance to your ruler can be offered.

The probability of a successful diplomatic take-over depends on the peace level between the provinces. Any ruler who has a peace level of over 50 with a rival ruler has a shot at gaining the rival's province using this command.

Prestige is the other variable that impacts the results of the Recommend command. If your ruler's Prestige exceeds that of the target province's ruler, this weighs heavily in favor of your success.

With both high Prestige and high Peace, your diplomatic mission is sure to succeed.

Tribute

Tribute provides a more effective mechanism for raising the Peace level between tribes than does trading by way of Caravans. Offering common items as Tribute makes a big hit with the recipient. As a general rule, the amount of the commodity given as Tribute is not terribly important. I've had emissaries take a single cow or one unit of wood or steel, and return with the thanks of the tribe to whom the paltry tribute was given.

Although certain rulers take offense to such pittance offers and blow off your emissary, this reaction is rare. Try giving small amounts when the game begins, so as not to consume the tribe's few resources.

A ruler cannot trade with a competitor until Tribute has been offered to and accepted by the competitor. This establishes a positive peace rating and the basis for further contact between the tribes. The provinces adjoining a tribe can blitz a rival ruler's provinces with Tribute for a quick rise in Peace.

War

Chapter 6 covers all aspects of War. Please be patient. You'll arrive there and learn how to raid, pillage, and bludgeon soon enough!

Dismiss

Use this command to dismiss a champion who isn't cutting the mustard. If the champion is convincing enough at defending himself against dismissal, the ruler has the option to not take this undeniably drastic action. Dismiss can come back to haunt your ruler. Do you think the canned champion is going to go somewhere and sulk? No, he or she will head straight for the nearest ruler with the greatest dislike for your employer.

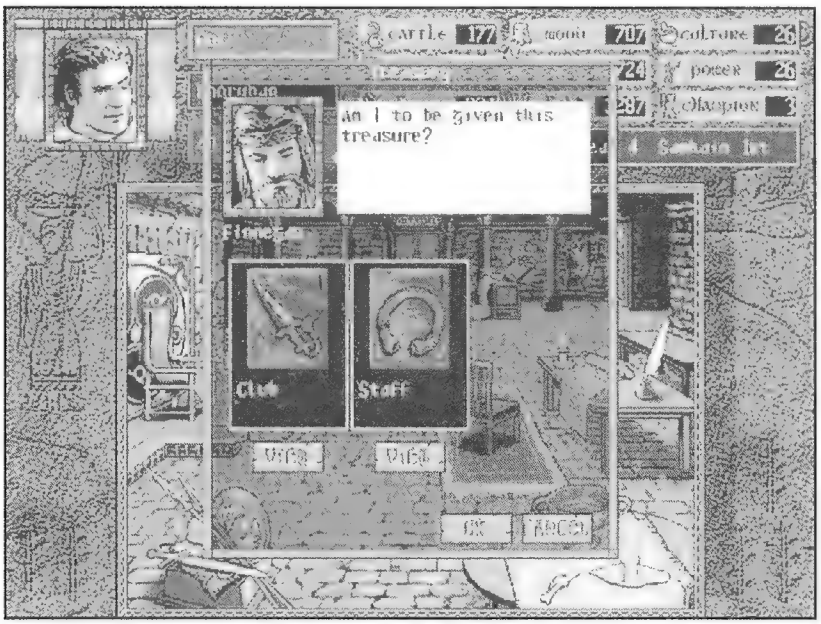


Figure 4-6.
Finnegas is about to get a weapon from the Treasury.

Treasury

The Citadel's Treasury is the only place where items, even magic runes, can be given to champions or traded between champions. The interactive screens associated with this feature are easy to follow, providing straightforward options to give an item, change an item, or to take other appropriate actions.

Don't forget that the champion in the Burg who created the item does not automatically equip or wear the item. Even the maker must go into the Treasury to be outfitted with the new creation.

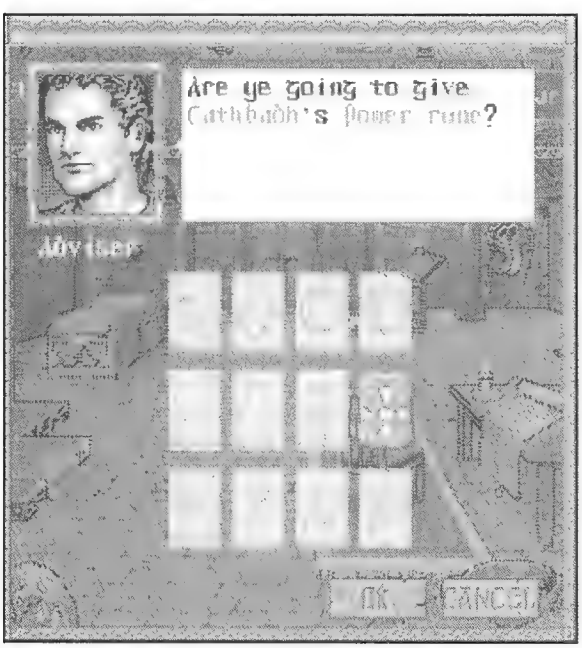


Figure 4-7.
Even runes can be traded at the Treasury.

TABLE 4-6 Experience Gained, Strength Lost, and Command Duration

Command	Experience Gain	Strength Lost	Duration[1]
Caravan	40	–	2
Chop	20	7	1
Create	30	10	*
Delegate	–	–	1
Explore	40	10	2
Herd	29	–	1
Hurling	–	–	1
Invade & Win	15	0	1
Invade & Lose	0	–	1
Magic	–	–	1
Mine	20	7	1
Move	–	–	1
Recommend	–	–	2
Rest	–	–	1
Tribute	40	10	2

LEGEND

1 In months. Based on the command involving a province adjacent to the champion's current location.

***** Depends on complexity of item being built. Some items take one turn, others eight.

Burg

This section describes the four primary activities associated with the Burg command.

Create (Common Items)

All champions in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* can equip themselves with or use any items in the game. No restrictions apply.

All champions can create items, provided they possess the required experience and skills. The higher their Experience level, the fancier the items they can make. Remember, champions with the Form skill use only half the wood and/or metal needed to make a particular item.

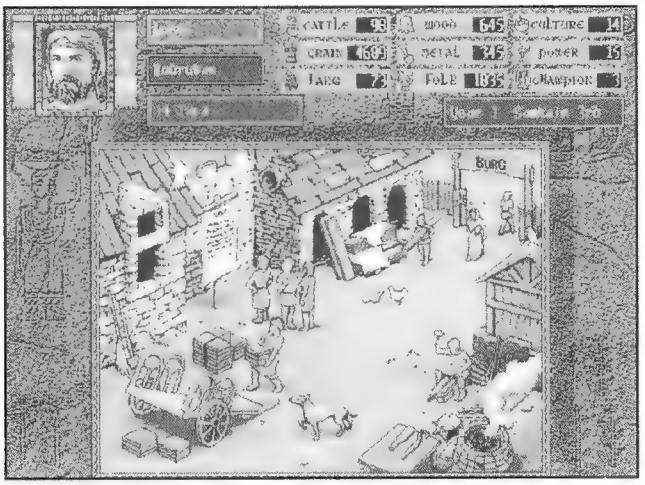


Figure 4-8.
A bustling province Burg. Take a trip, create an item, conduct a poll, or join a caravan to trade with a foreign province.

Caravan (Trade)

After another ruler has accepted your Tribute, your ruler can then trade as often as desired with all provinces governed by the other ruler. The game manual prudently warns not to take huge amounts of goods for trade. When rival provinces are unable to reciprocate in kind, a trade is out of the question.

If a ruler refuses to trade with your ruler's envoy, chances are bargaining will make no difference. Bargaining rarely convinces a rival ruler to make a deal that was previously rejected. When a deal is turned down, Prestige drops slightly.

To better your trading potential, first do your homework on the targeted province to determine whether they have what you need. Keep in mind that you cannot trade a good for itself. When you enter the competitor's palace to trade, note that the commodity you brought to trade is dimmed and unselectable for the transaction.

Because of this limitation, never take grain to trade. Without a doubt, grain is the most bountiful commodity. Every province in Eire seems to enjoy abundant harvests during the beginning of the Beltene season. Though cattle is a revered trade item, metal seems to be the commodity most coveted by the majority of Eire rulers. This conclusion is firmly substantiated by the more than two million actual trades by Toby Hoodie Crow, Eire's ranking trader.

If Peace is established with another tribe, then broken by either side, future trading becomes very difficult and hardly worth the effort. Tribute should raise the Peace from the depths, but the process can be agonizingly slow.

Poll

This command enables your ruler's adviser to give a snapshot assessment of how well the province is doing. The adviser candidly recommends specific actions that the province chief should take.

Most of the time, the adviser merely repeats the obvious. This sometimes lackluster performance is probably due to the ruler's "generous" monthly payment to the adviser–a cow and a glass of mead.

Move

Moving accomplishes several objectives.

If the destination is an empty province discovered by an explorer, this command, when completed within one month, gains the ruler a new province, increased Prestige, valuable resources, and another Champion Tent with which to discover and recruit.

Use Move to replenish and reinforce your tribe's own provinces that are low on champions and commodities.

Champion Tent

The many champions who freely roam Eire encounter no interference from the tribes. All of Eire's tribes have set up hospitality suites in these gigantic tents for the comfort of visiting champions. No expense has been spared.

Wandering champions are revered and expect their every whim to be satisfied. Rulers gladly comply, not out of any respectful or charitable urge, but to butter up the nomads and convince them to join the tribe.

The Champion Tent is one of the more imposing structures in every province. At the beginning of every month, a province chief feels an exiting rush as the tent's flap is peeled back . . . to reveal up to six champions that are passing through the province. At the very least, visiting the tent provides the province chief with plentiful advice and information. Champions are never at a loss for words.

Champions passing through interact with the province chief, not with the ruler. A province chief's Charm, rather than the ruler's, determines whether the champion can

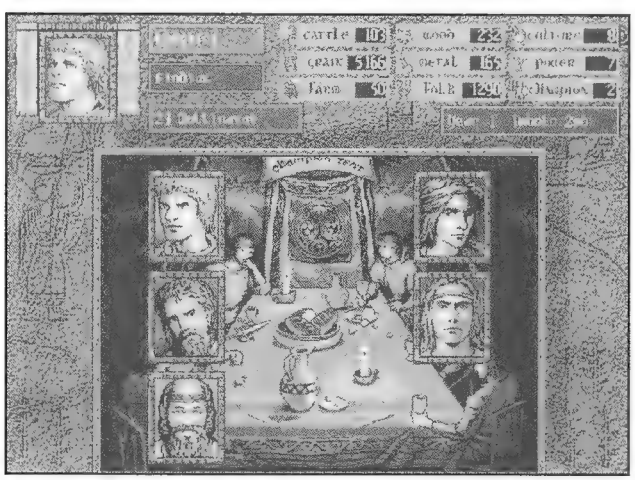


Figure 4-9.
Visit the Champion Tent, packed with visiting dignitaries. Learn spells, try to recruit, or just listen to a poem.

be recruited. In Chapter 10, the celebrated Charming Roving Ruler strategy, which increases the chance of successfully recruiting needed champions, is discussed.

Bards relate tales of famed items the goddess Danu will, hopefully, grant the ruler, as well as to recite classical poetry that uplifts the soul. Druids present the province chief with up to three spells to learn. Warriors brag of deeds past and future.

All visiting champions are willing conversationalists, providing useful information on themselves, other Eire provinces, and roving champions. Rulers can see how their tribe ranks against the others in Eire, at least through the eyes of the champion. If the champion thinks the ruler's tribe is top-dog at that moment, the champion offers an opinion on what tribe is the next strongest.

While some champions prove more adventuresome than others and travel far from home, rulers can expect to see the same wanderers appear in the tent on a regular basis. Certain rovers–probably enticed by the haute cuisine chefs that rulers usually retain–seem to stay on indefinitely from month to month, even season to season. Perhaps that's why most Eire libraries stock the amusing novel "The Champion Who Came to Dinner."

With all this trekking around and recruiting, there comes a point in playing *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* when the wandering champion pool dries up, usually between years seven and 10.

Talk

In the Champion Tent, you can learn a lot about what's going on throughout Eire. From a purely practical standpoint, of the four talk options, the only one with essential information is the last option involving "Other Tribes."

This option gives the champion's assessment of which tribe is the strongest in Eire. The champion also suggests the second strongest tribe, if you're considered the strongest.

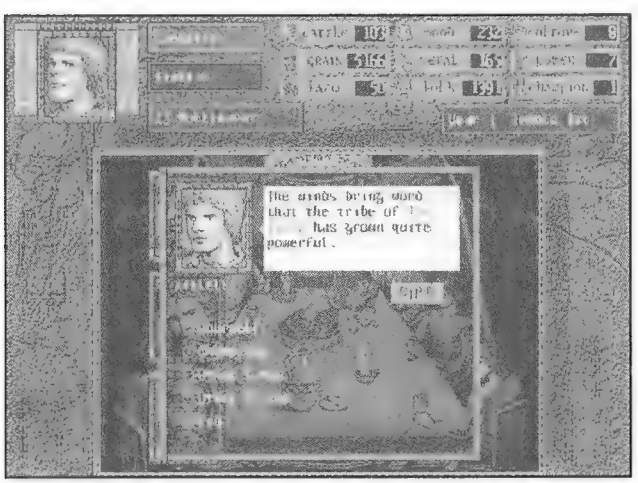


Figure 4-10.
Too bad, another tribe seems to have achieved the status of Eire's strongest.

Definitely a memorable moment in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* comes the first time a visiting champion tells a province chief that the home tribe is the strongest in all of Eire.

Ordinarily, a wandering champion's assessment of the strongest tribe in the land is accurate. The wise ruler then immediately targets that tribe for diplomatic or military operations.

Recruit

By far, the greatest impact of the champion visits is that all of the wanderers qualify for recruitment to join your ruler's tribe. At one time, these wanderers pledged loyalty to province rulers past. Disagreements over the outlook for Eire forced these wanderers to journey forth alone, beholding to no ruler. Balor's threat changed this isolated outlook, making the former loners more agreeable to aligning with one of the island's tribes.

When it comes to champions, more is infinitely better than less. A greater number of loyal champions gives the tribe's ruler and province chiefs extended opportunities to improve the domain and to more effectively wage war.

Determining exactly when the province chief's recruitment attempt will succeed is difficult to pinpoint. A few general guidelines will help you predict the results:

- **High Charm + Equal Experience = Excellent Chance** *If a province chief has high Charm and an Experience level approximating that of the wanderer's, there is an excellent chance the visitor will join the tribe.*

- **Low Charm + Equal Experience = Good Chance** *If a province chief has Experience but low Charm, the chances are reduced to slightly above average.*

- **Low Charm + Low Experience = Fat Chance** *If the province chief endeavoring to recruit doesn't have much Charm or Experience, the recruitment possibility plunges to almost nothing.*

Occasionally, even when the province chief's attributes indicate any recruiting will fail, the attempt succeeds for no apparent reason. Perhaps the wanderer was feeling particularly lonely that day. In any event, the possibility of erratic recruiting results makes it imperative that the province chief try to recruit every visiting champion as a matter of course at the beginning of each month.

Of course, the opposite is also true. A recruiting province chief with high Charm and high Experience tries to get the wanderer to join him, and the potential ally might turn the offer down flat–again, for no apparent reason.

Once a ruler's Level (experience) and Charm reach double digits, it becomes dirt simple to recruit any wandering champion. You should keep in mind that, just before the final battles, a parade of champions appears before the ruler–a true wealth of champion riches. This provides a stable of eligible participants to participate in the end game.

A word to the wise regarding War, which is repeated in Chapter 6: Don't exile every defeated champion, especially rulers. While they may come back to haunt you on the road to High Ruler, some of them may be just the prime candidates your ruler needs to defeat Conann and Balor.

When a ruler convinces a wandering champion to join the tribe, the new ally becomes so overcome with emotion that Rest for an entire month must be taken. (Personally, I think it was the all-night celebration bash!)

Learn First, Recruit Second

Roving druids teach magic spells at a cost of 15 head of cattle for each spell a ruler wishes to learn. The imparted knowledge becomes known to all mages in the tribe.

When a druid teaches a spell, he or she gives the recipient the locations on the rune tablet for the casting runes, as well as the proper element for completing the spell. See Chapter 9, which discusses magic in detail. On any one visit, a druid can teach up to three spells. Learning these spells one at a time quickly depletes your valued herd, but the province chief has no choice, this is the going rate in every province in Eire.

Always learn spells from a visiting champion before trying to recruit the druid. Once recruited, a druid has no way of teaching other spell-casters the spells the druid knows. Even worse, the recruited druid cannot personally cast spells available for teaching. *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* doesn't explain why this happens, so let's chalk it up to an apparent memory lapse afflicting Eire denizens as a result of the harsh winters.

Druids can teach different spells on different visits. Keep hitting the Learn button, even if you previously acquired all the spells you could from that particular druid on a prior visit. He or she may just have more to offer this visit.

Tales–Treasure and Poems

A bard's tale gives the progressing ruler an advance look at the whys and wherefores of famed items. Danu rewards any advancing ruler, not just the player's ruler, with extraordinary gifts that bestow fantastic items of enhancement. In any one game, it is unlikely the goddess will extend her generosity to granting you all of the available famed items. Check out Table 8-3 in Chapter 8 for a complete catalogue of famed items.

For another 20 head of cattle, you can temporarily convert the Champion Tent into a bygone-years coffeehouse, minus the smoke and bad java. The wanderer rises and soliloquizes for hours–or until the province chief runs out of cattle.

The 20 head of cattle charged by the wanderer for telling a tale emphasizes the need for province leaders to develop competent cattle herders. Certain wandering champions always tell the same tales, no matter how hard you try to get them to talk about other items.

It is doubtful that the poems provide anything of significance in defeating Balor. If you discover any overlooked importance to these non-rhyming sonnets, please contact the author via CompuServe at 74363,1643 (for players who use an online service other than CompuServe, the e-mail address is: 74363.1643@CompuServe.com).

Finally, if you've got the cattle, support your local poet or poetess.

Contest

Sometimes, the only way to get a warrior to connect with your tribe is to duke it out on the field of combat. Choose any champion in the province to represent the ruler. If you soundly defeat the visitor, the wandering warrior signs up. Otherwise, the champion must rest for several turns to recover and becomes useless to the tribe.

Sure, peaceful recruiting is less disastrous on a champion's body, but many nomadic warriors are at a high experience level. As a result, probably any recruitment attempts would prove futile. If you've got a spare champion with decent stats, go for the peaceful route! In my experience, the chances of successfully recruiting a warrior in this manner are slim to none.

WARNING: Unless you really need the visiting warrior, don't let the ruler participate in the fight. If the contest completely saps the ruler's Strength, it will not bode well if an enemy attacks the next month.

Council (Tribal)

The Tribal Council, which consists of four worthy Eire champions, provides your ruler with invaluable information and advice. Every month, the council convenes in the Council Chamber around a grand, ornate conference table. The council's services are available without charge to any tribal ruler in Eire. Playing no favorites ensures that all rulers are treated fairly in the struggle to become High Ruler.

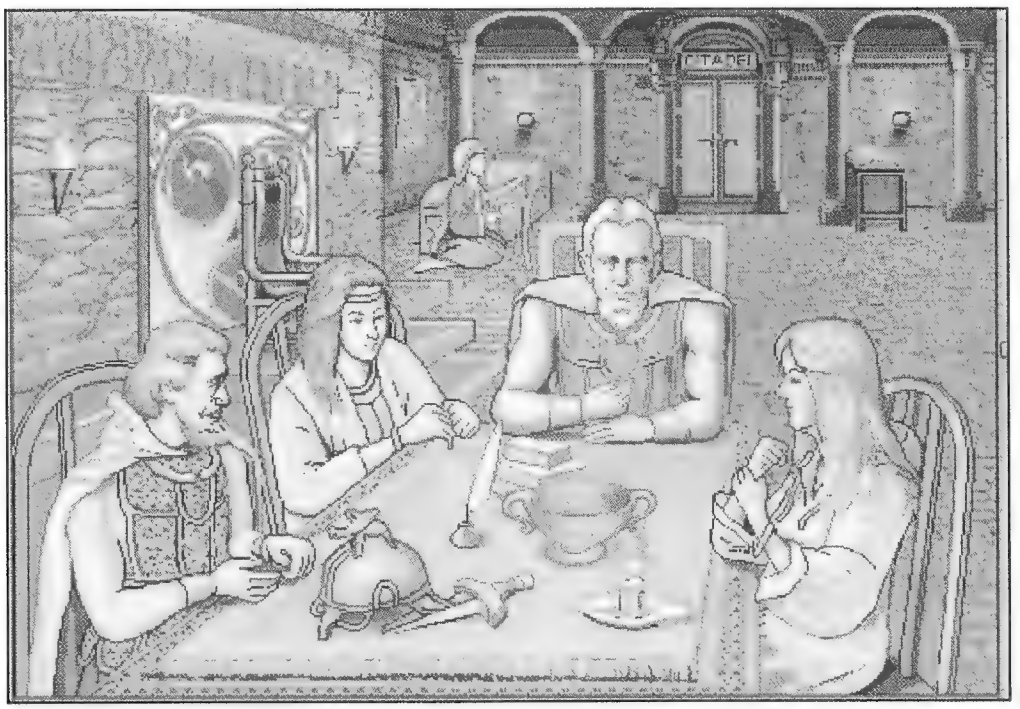


Figure 4-11.
The Tribal Council.

Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye bestows no names on these four important personages. So, I named them. A description of their principal duties and the names I've appointed these stalwarts follow.

At the head of the table sits a grizzled warrior, a veteran of many Eire wars. Sporting snow-white hair and beard, this champion supplies your ruler or province chief with the ruler's vital prestige rating, as well as the prestige rating of any rival tribes with whom your ruler has established any positive peace rating. This venerable warrior also gives you the number of champions, provinces, and folk.

Call him Hartleigh mac Lesser, the Doler (of Prestige and vital information).

The aristocratic priestess to the right of Harleigh is your ruler's eyes and ears to the Eire map and province intelligence. When exploring champions return, they report to the priestess, who constantly updates the map. Any highlighted province may be selected. This brings forth the pertinent Province screen for your ruler's viewing pleasure. This begins the process of deciding what provinces to assist or attack.

Call her Juliana Jon Bret de Skooginh, Regent of the Valley with Burnt Trees.

At the foot of the table sits another war veteran. Putting to work his years of experience as a foreman in a fashionable Burg sweatshop, this champion displays a work report. The report tells the ruler the current status of all champion activities being surveyed in the province.

Call him Stewart, Preserver of the Confounded "*P.*"

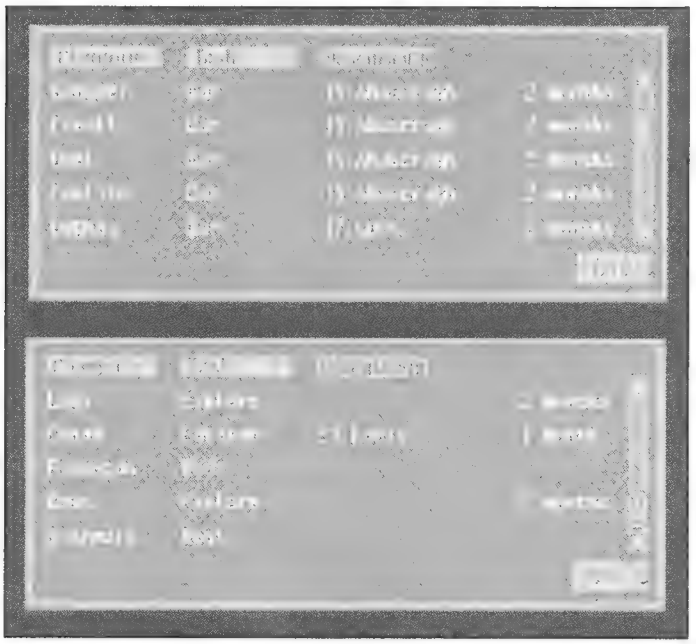


Figure 4-12.
A typical work report for a Diplomat and for a Warmonger.

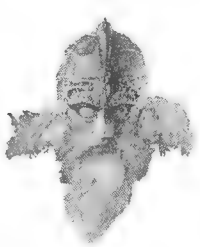
The fair bard to the right of Juliana is without peer in providing the ruler with pithy help on all the game's commands. She also discloses private information on the effects of all commands the ruler may issue. After your ruler gains experience in the game, a courteous wave to this bard on entering the Council Chamber is all that is required.

Call her Debraugh, Guardian of the Tralee Minks.

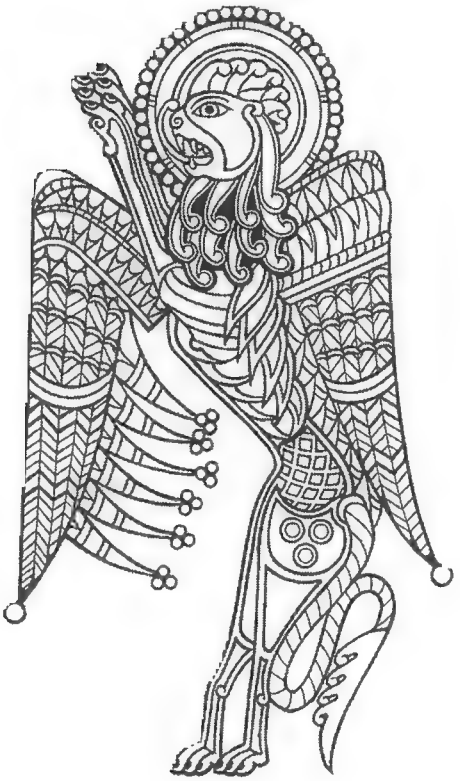
Complete knowledge and information on the doings of the other tribes is essential to progressing in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*. Concentrate on provinces bordering those of your tribe, as they pose the only immediate danger of attack and attempted takeover. Visit this council as a matter of course. Never take any course of action other than routine activities without first consulting the council.

Figure 4-13.
Celebrate as the province chief successfully recruits the wandering Gwyddno!

- *Don't voluntarily abandon provinces unless absolutely necessarily. Your hard-earned Prestige plummets!*
- *Head for the coast.*
- *Expand in a straight line and you will pay the consequences.*
- *Immediately identify and annex any unsettled provinces on your borders.*
- *Establish a strong defensive position in provinces that border on rulers with hostile tendencies.*
- *Eire has no currency, except for the cows and stuff.*
- *Raise the cattle level for tribute, trade, and learning spells, hearing poetic recitations, and enjoying tales of treasures from wandering, free champions.*
- *A ruler can only take a single action each month that impacts on a rival's province.*



Chapter Five



Random Events

The arrival of the four-season, 13-month annual Eire calendar brings both promise and misery. Promise comes in the way of rejoicing after a bountiful harvest or the birth of many cattle. Misery appears as Fomor bandits, pillaging and bringing ruin to the provinces by stealing the commodities so vital to the ruler's prosperity.

The Lovely Month of Imbolc

You'll soon get sick and tired of Balor sending a Fomor warrior to collect taxes and generally lower the ruler's resident province in the first month of every new year. With a game conceivably lasting 70 years, that's over 900 Fomor incursions. Worse yet, Fomors can raid any time, not just during their special new year's visit.

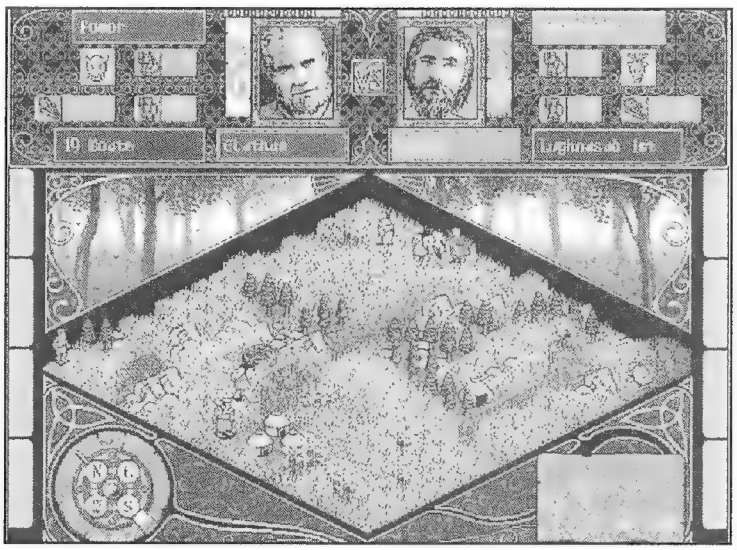


Figure 5-1.
Elathan leads a Fomor raid on Moate. Gwrhyr can do nothing to stop it.

Three kinds of events can occur at specific times of the year. Good events include festivals, Danu blessing the ruler with a famed item, the increased growth of cattle or the population, enhanced recovery of champion Strength, and reinforcements to the soldier population.

Another welcome event, the appearance of Skatha, is cause for jubilance. Skatha, one of the finest and most capable warriors in Eire trains your chosen champion in the military arts. Even though this takes four months, the effort greatly enhances the Arms attribute of the selected trainee.

Always accommodate your population when they wish to celebrate by holding a festival and asking the ruler for grain. Large drops in Prestige and especially Ability, which is tied closely to morale, follow. The amounts requested are never more than a few hundred units of grain. You can afford it, even in the first month of the game.

Along with the good comes the bad, mainly brought on by the Fomors, guided at all times by Balor. They uproot trees, create ruinous water spouts, and poison your precious cattle.

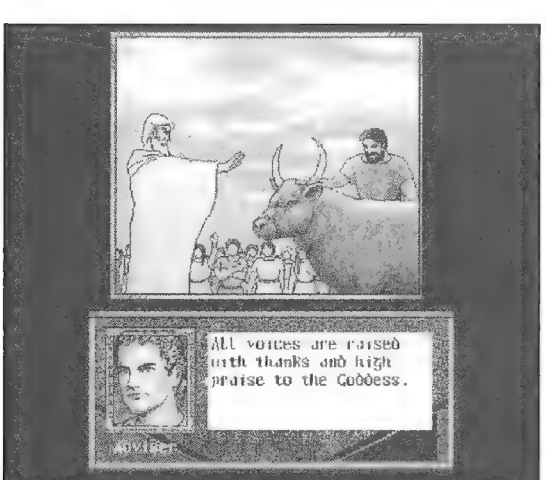


Figure 5-2.
Celebrating the birth of extra cattle.

Speaking of good and bad events, you may be wondering whether there's an ugly set of random events. Right, you are! Destructive fires are just some of the indignities practiced by the Fomors. The Fomor yearly tax collections are particularly infuriating. Fortunately, the Fomors never leave the ruler's residence province completely helpless.

Figure 5-3.
Diarmuid's Arms attribute rises appreciably after training with Skatha.

Coping with the Fortuitous

Only the Fomor tax collections at the beginning of every new year is a fixed, scheduled occurrence. After a couple of years of this, the ruler's nerves generally reach the breaking point.

As for refusing to pay your taxes, on a rare occasion, a high-charmed ruler may occasionally mentally overpower the Fomor tax collector and get away scot-free. (I have calculated the odds on getting away with this: about 10 to one, on a good day!) This is rare though.

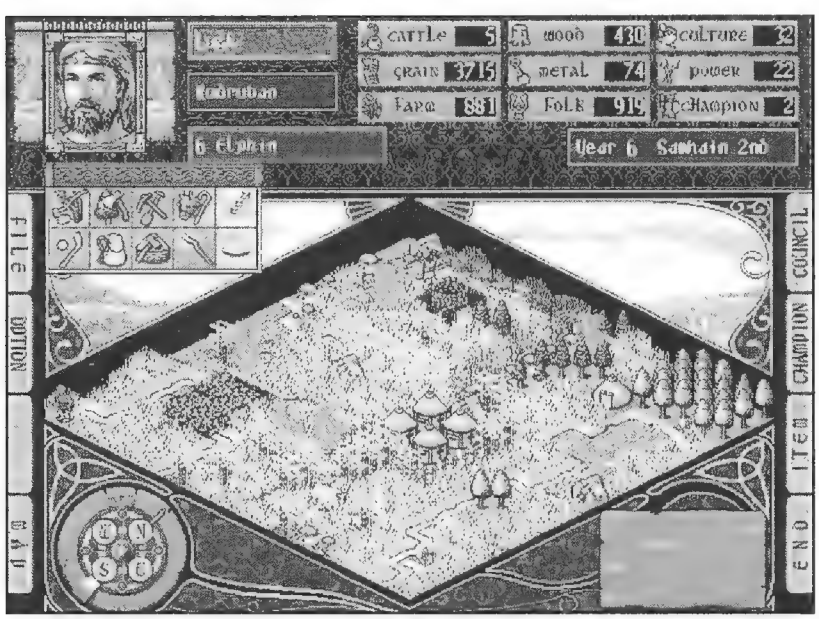


Figure 5-4.
Fires set by the dastardly Fomors. A druid's Extinguish spell will help.

Usually tax evasion is handled this way: A Fomor takes the chosen champion outside and beats the living daylights out of the foil. Late in the game, you stand a real chance of defeating the tax-collecting Fomors, but by then, you should be economically strong and should simply pay up. Always remember, you'll meet these brigands soon enough and exact your retribution.

The other misery-making and joy-invoking events may or may not happen, depending on mysterious formulas buried deep within the game's program code.

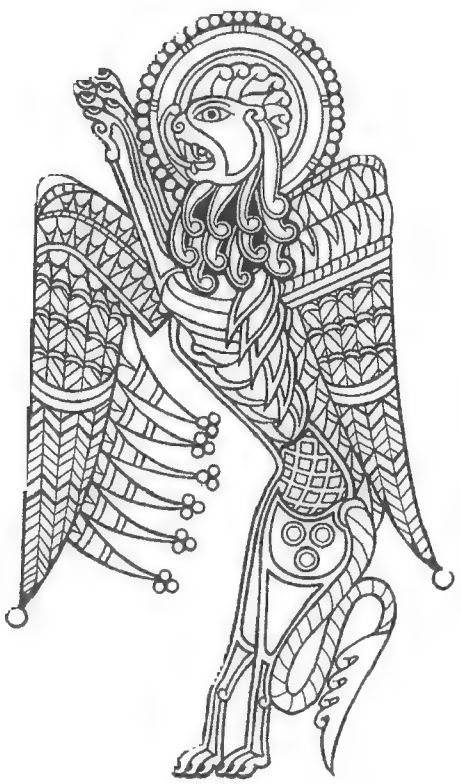
- *Random means random. There's very little you can do to prevent or predict the random events.*

- *Challenging a Fomor to combat rather than pay taxes on the new year is generally completely useless, even at high Experience levels. The trick is in the mages!*

- *Never, ever refuse grain to your people desiring to put on a festival celebration. Your Prestige and Ability will plunge.*

- *Druids can extinguish fires set by Fomors.*

Chapter Six



War

War plays a pivotal role in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*. It is one of only two ways to annex Eire provinces belonging to other tribes. The other method is the peaceful, diplomatic strategy, discussed in Chapter 7.

The costs of war vary widely and deeply. Huge amounts of grain are needed to feed your invading army of champions. Even if victorious, the invaders may be reduced to a weakened state, subject, in turn, to raids from other provinces that have wisely watched and waited. It is not unusual to capture a province by force only to have another province cross your new border and take away your new province before you can even check out the Champion Tent.

Any attempt to unify Eire by diplomacy alone is an almost impossible task. In addition to Balor, some of Eire's 17 other non-Fomor rulers are naturally belligerent. I learned this by

playing a game in which I had to use every turn to either build up my home provinces or engage in Trade and Tribute with other tribes. For three years, I developed mounting peace levels with several other tribes. All was going well–until the Beltene season of year four. At that time, three of my four allies with Peace levels ranging from 20 to 50 attacked my provinces without provocation.

Rest assured, I tried to exact a terrible revenge on those back-stabbing rulers. Unfortunately, my sole concentration on peaceful unification of Eire made my domain hopelessly unprepared for such belligerence. My ruler and escorting champions experienced utter collapse, defeat, and exile. Forewarned is forearmed!

Preparing to Invade–Calm Before the Storm

Before you assault and attempt to take over a neighboring province, carefully consider the likelihood of success and the consequences of this drastic action. At the top of your "to do" list should be assuring that the home fires burn brightly and for a long time. If your ruler's provinces are in domestic and economic shambles with few champions, spend a couple of years correcting these deficiencies. Until your own house is in order, conquering others should wait.

If you still wish to move ahead, consider a few months of Trade and Tribute with tribes that directly abut your provinces' borders. This provides no guarantee that these neighbors will not attack, but you can always restore a save game!

Finding the Sitting Target

Regularly survey the provinces of rival tribes to identify possible invasion objectives. Look carefully at the resource balances of the possible targets. In doing so, keep in mind that the province from which the invasion is launched must be guarded or it also will become a target.

In planning to overrun a province, give priority to attacking provinces where rulers are present. Benign rulers, if defeated in battle with no escape route, occasionally put the unity of Eire above personal feuds and join a victorious rival. Most rulers have impressive Attribute scores, Inborn and Acquired skills, wield excellent Items, and would be welcome additions to your tribe. Finvarra will spit in your face, but Conchobar, the great warrior, is glad to ally, despite the humiliation of any defeat to the King of Ulster. Naturally, defeating Conchobar is not easy at any time in the game.

Be careful your war plans do not include casting Heal and Transfer Mana spells in the month the ruler wishes the invasion to begin. If any mage cast one of these spells, it constitutes their turn for the month, and the mage will not be able to join the invasion

force. Postponing the invasion another month might be the only feasible step a ruler can take when this happens. If the invasion is postponed, run, don't walk, to the Tribal Council to find out whether the province targeted for the invasion has bolstered its defenses enough to cause the ruler to reconsider the invasion decision.

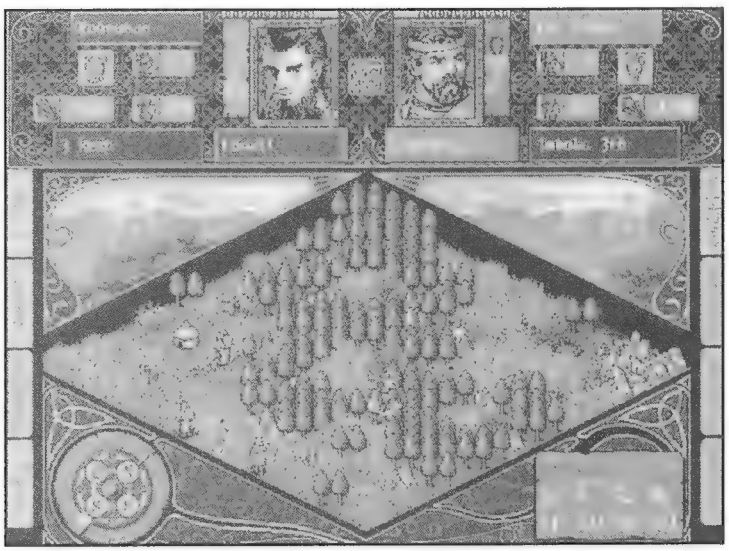


Figure 6-1.
The battle lines are drawn. Conall eyes Finvarra's position across the battlefield.

Sometimes, prior knowledge gained by exploring champions will be lost from the Tribal Council Map, and no invasion is possible. Another exploration of the intended target is required before the practical ruler decides to invade. Flying blind by invading without information on the intended target is foolhardy.

When the explorer returns, check the province data carefully. Much can change in the two months it takes to revisit the target province. The once weak or defenseless target may have since become the mightiest military machine in the country. Just as you wouldn't expect your ruler to leave a province undefended, so rival rulers take the same precautions. Use the time to recruit other champions or use the Move command to reinforce the province from which the eventual invasion will take place.

Stop by the Tribal Council

Call on the Tribal Council every month without fail. Make sure you have current data on all provinces, especially those bordering on those of your ruler. The Map Priestess has this information. If the map shows adjacent provinces highlighted, immediately send out scouts to explore bordering provinces. On a scout's return, the Map Priestess shows you the particulars of the researched province. Although exploration takes two months (one out, one in), this is the only way to make informed invasion decisions.

While vigilantly monitoring your geographical neighbors every month in this way, closely scrutinize the province chief, who may or may not be the tribe's ruler. If the

chief is low on Strength and just lollygaggles about at or near the border where your champions will enter when the invasion begins, attack quickly. This is absolutely the best, low-cost way to annex an adjacent province.

Always include in the attacking party a druid with the Nature skill. In those periods when all battlefield combatants are forced to rest, a mage with this skill hastens the healing process. When the rest period is over, all of the ruler's champions will recover more Strength than the opponent who doesn't have as skilled a mage.

As mentioned, invading a province without current information on its chief, champion count and quality, and Power level, is flying blind. This daring course of action might enhance the thrill of victory, but it carries a low chance of victory. Can you imagine arrogantly entering a rival ruler's heavily-fortified home province guarded by strong, well-prepared champions. Consider this a sure way to play *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* for 900 turns and into the 21st century.

Avoid rival provinces that are top-heavy with magicians, unless your ruler is confident that it is possible to execute a quick takeover by overcoming the province chief.

Target provinces that allow no escape route back to the rival's home province. The chiefs of such provinces tend to sue for peace and surrender much quicker. Ever notice how, when engaged with an overwhelming force, a province chief just throws up his or her hands and heads for the comfort of a neighboring shelter province? Without that security blanket, provinces are much easier to invade and conquer.

Is Planning Really Necessary?

Then again, what difference does it really make? If you run head-on into a superior force, simply retreat from whence you came. The worst that can happen is your Prestige drops, but rulers using the military approach to Eire unification could care less about Prestige or even Peace, for that matter. Think of it as a trial invasion. There is a chance that some of the invading champions may be unable to escape, but then again, chances not taken are chances lost.

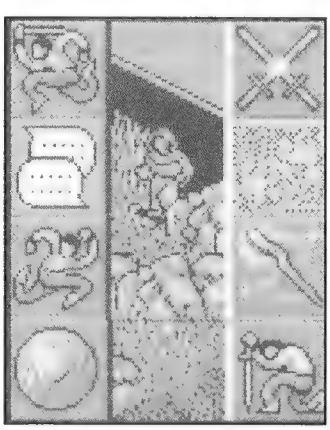


Figure 6-2.
The Battle Command Palette.

Bye Bye Peace

If you conduct a lengthy, carefully-crafted crusade of Tribute and Trade with the targeted province, the Peace level heightened from that activity reduces to zero the second your champions cross the border. Not only does an attack completely nullify the hard-earned Peace growth, but it makes any future attempts to deal with the ruler of the tribe living in the invaded province doubly difficult. Of course, if your intended attack eliminates the tribe forever, this caution may not be of concern.

Table 6-1 provides a short checklist of province conditions that make the target a prime candidate for invasion.

TABLE 6-1 Target Province Conditions Favoring Invasion

Province Chief Strength	Below 50%
Province Chief Location	At or near border to be crossed
Champion Count	Half the number that will be invading
Power	Under 15
Food	Insufficient quantity to feed champions and soldiers while fighting[1]

LEGEND

1 Defender does not have enough grain to feed soldiers for more than a day or two.

After all this brain bending about whether or not to invade, you enter the Citadel to begin preparations for the assault. Your adviser refuses to let you invade! Why? Have you forgotten that one of your champions is interacting with the target province, perhaps on a tribute or trade mission. Another reason for your adviser's seeming insubordination is that you may have sent another exploring champion to regain information on the targeted province. Again, in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*, only a single command can affect any one province on any one turn. Unfortunately, you'll just have to wait until next month to perform the deed.

One last thing before beginning an invasion: Do not spread your champions and resources too thinly throughout the tribe's provinces. Either contingency can easily lead to ruinous consequences. The lack of resources results in a flattened Culture and Item rate, while the fact that only a few champions guard a province will assuredly cause a rival ruler to swoop in and conquer.

Mount Up

When you're ready to invade, commence the war from the Citadel. In choosing what champions to send, think quality not quantity. A few hot champions perform much better than a bunch of low-level turkeys. If the ruler is in the province, he or she should be selected as the battle chief or guide, and the champion with the next highest Arms should be chosen as guide or battle chief.

Sometimes, the ruler is too weak from other activities. In that case, select a strong champion to lead the attack. Take along as many champions as necessary to maintain your advantage in the war. You can take along up a to maximum of seven.

How large should the attack force be? That depends, of course, on the Strength of the province targeted for attack. If the enemy province is essentially a sitting duck, there's no difficulty in calculating how large a force to take. It's quite another story when the future opponents are evenly matched. Take an army twice the size of your rival's or, if using high-level champions, take one of equal size.

Whatever the size, balance the invading party between warriors and magicians. The magician contingent should include at least one bard and one druid. Each brings their own special spells to combat. If only one mage can go along, make it the druid, who is the only mage who can cast Heal.

Champions and their escorting soldiers fight without much vigor on an empty stomach. Grain must be taken along with an invading force. The amount to be taken depends on how many days the combat will consume.

A specific formula for champion and soldier grain consumption is provided in the manual. Food made from grain is used up four times a day at the rate of 25 percent of the number of soldiers participating in the invasion. Put another way, the thinking commander should calculate the number of soldiers to be taken, the sum of which equals the amount of food to be consumed in one day. Given the invading force limit of seven champions and 100 soldiers per champion, food would top out at 700 units of grain per day. The maximum a war can last is seven days, that is 4,900 units of grain, tops. Taking less grain than would be consumed in a seven-day war is taking a chance. Most wars do not last that length of time, but you never know. Plan ahead.

Late in the game, provinces store tens of thousands of units of grain. At that point, you no longer have to factor this matter into the invasion question. In truth, I never ran out of grain, not ever, in the many games of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* I've played.

Do the Wave

Only a single invasion of a target province by any one ruler is possible on any one turn. Even if your ruler governs provinces completely encircling the target province, only one province can attack.

When at least two of your ruler's provinces border on a desired takeover province, an extremely effective strategy is to "do the wave." This ploy calls for your ruler to send invading forces into the intended victim turn after turn, and, if necessary, yet another turn. Over time, the mark is gradually weakened with each attack. Finally, unable to withstand the onslaught, the target succumbs. Few single provinces have Strength enough to withstand this ploy.

Although this tried-and-true approach works like a charm, it devours Strength and champions like a giant mouth. Undertake the wave only when your ruler has a hearty surplus of champions, resources, and especially, patience. This ploy works best if the attacking province is powerful and heavily populated by a strong ruler and capable champions, particularly if you're attempting to overrun a well-defended province. Weaken the scoundrels. Unleash one attack after another until you beat them into submission.

Save the Game!

Before any invasion, especially one involving the ruler, save the game. If things go badly, just use the game's handy load game command.

- *A seven-day war with seven champions expends exactly 4,900 units of grain.*
- *At no time should you initiate a war without current data on the target province.*
- *Keep the home front protected, with at least two champions who weigh more than 130 pounds each!*
- *War reduces the number of exposed tribal borders. This is good!*
- *Ask questions (of the Tribal Council) first, assault later.*

The Invasion

When your attacking champions cross the border, the battle begins! A Battle screen displays, containing a detailed presentation of all relevant information on the invading and defending forces.

Combat Screen

The attacker appears on the left of the screen, the defender on the right.

Table 6-2 (see page 74) reviews Battle screen data.

TABLE 6-2 Battle Screen Data Explanation and Remarks

Category	Remarks
Champions	Number possible. Maximum of seven, including the battle chief
Grain	One unit, times the number of soldiers per day feeds the opposing champions
Soldiers	No more than 100 per champion

The small Status scroll in the lower right hand corner of the screen shows the local weather conditions: clear, rainy, foggy, or snowy. The wind conditions round out the status display: calm, windy, or none, and the wind direction.

Terrain and Weather

Terrain plays an important part in a ruler's plan for how a war will be fought. Combat taking place in the northern reaches of Eire in the winter increases the chance of extreme weather. Invasion under these conditions might very well fail in a war of attrition, as both sides can be paralyzed.

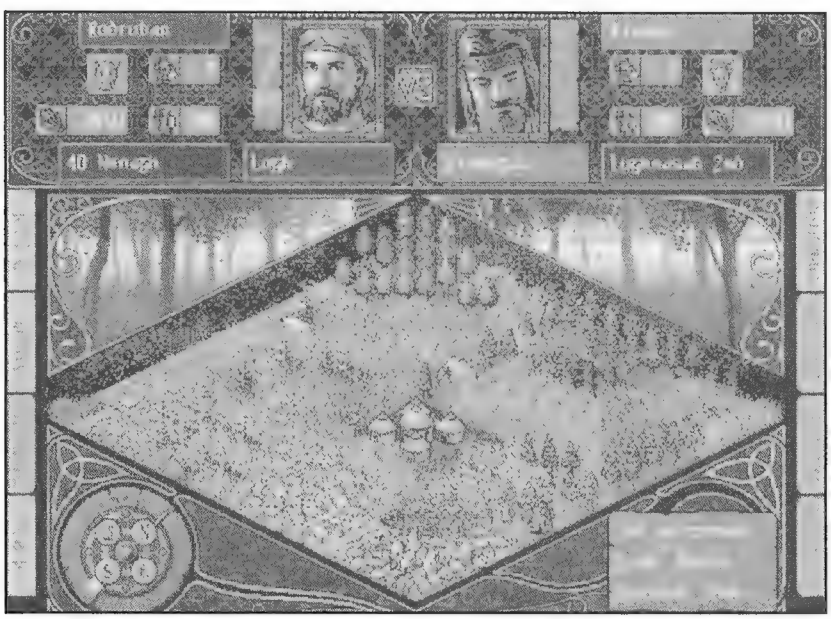


Figure 6-3.
Where is everybody? Fog makes battle planning a nightmare!

Different terrain influences how easily and far a champion can move in battle. Terrain level is also an important factor. Certain terrain is impenetrable–such as, water, deep forests, and marshes.

TABLE 6-3 Weather and Terrain Effects on Movement During War[1]

Battlefield Conditions	Movement Ease
Clear Weather	
Farmland, Grassland, or Rockland	High
Spell-trapped Land[2]	Low
Rainy Weather	
Farmland, Grassland, or Rockland	Restricted
Spell-trapped Land	Low
Foggy Weather	
Farmland, Grassland, or Rockland	High
Spell-trapped Land[2]	Low
Snowy Weather	
Farmland, Grassland, or Rockland	High
Spell-trapped Land[2]	Low

LEGEND

1. Whatever the weather, movement through deep forests, marshes, and the water is impossible. Snow movement is out of the question. Winds negate the effects of any clouds.
2. Land subjected to fire trap and tree tangle spells.

The Part Water spell produces shallows for about a day of the battle, permitting champions to pass through the terrain. Terrain that enables combatants to fully maneuver are Grassland, Farmland, and Rockland. Land subjected to Fire Trap or Tree Tangle spells makes for slow going or no going, depending on the Strength of the trapped champion.

In combination with terrain, weather directly impacts movement during a war, as follows:

- *Clear weather permits all combatants to move freely about the battlefield. The normal spell-casting ranges are attainable.*
- *Rainy weather reduces movement and spell ranges by about half.*
- *Fog completely covers the scene of battle. The only visible opponents are those in an adjacent position to the active champion. Spell-casting is almost impossible, unless the spell caster is adjacent to the spell's target or the actual target. Movement is not*

hindered, but special care must be taken so as not to inadvertently intercept an opposing champion when you're low on Strength.

- *Snow completely prevents any movement. Spellcasters have a limited range, but visibility is not a problem. Many battles have been won in the snow. This speaks volumes about the desirability of a ruler ensuring that all invading forces include mages.*
- *Wind impacts on combat in only one way. Any champion caught in a spell's poison cloud or other wispy swirl will breathe a sigh of relief when the wind kicks up and blows away the haze. On the next turn, the freed champion has 100 percent use of body and mind. The small status scroll should be checked at the beginning of every turn to monitor the wind conditions.*

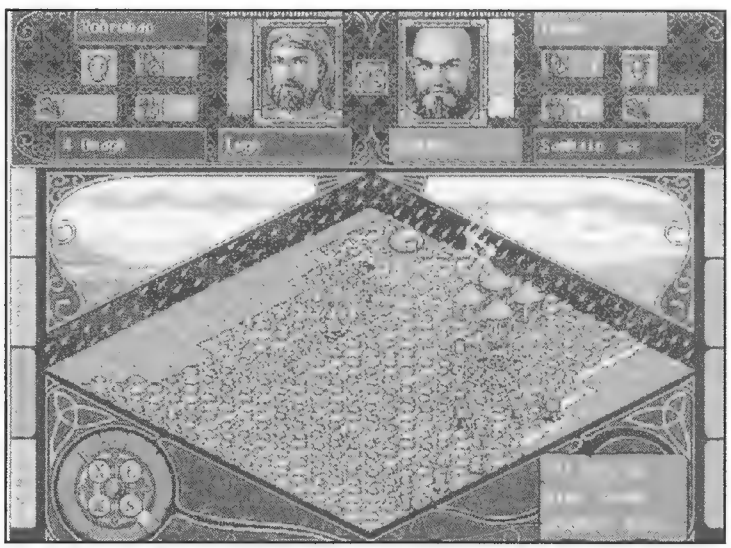


Figure 6-4.
Lightning Spell cast in a rainstorm. Good idea?

Pray for Rain, Fog, and Magicians

Use inclement weather to your ruler's advantage. Let's examine some tactics for the *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* equivalent of a London fog. Despite the fact that rival champion movements are mostly obscured, when a champion moves, a brief flicker appears on the screen. Visualize the direction of the moving rival and try to pinpoint a likely destination.

Restricted movement in bad weather often makes the mage a deciding factor in the battle's outcome. For example, no champion can move in snow. Occasionally, the snow lasts for days at a time. Snow only lowers, but does not eliminate, visibility. Mages can cast spells to their heart's content, while the warriors have no alternative but to rest and regain their Strength. Mages love the snow. Self-centered, egocentric mages revel when the white stuff falls from the sky. The only melee possible in a blizzard is between opposing champions occupying adjacent positions on the field of battle.

Another word about fog. Normally, this weather condition completely prevents a champion from seeing the other battle participants, except for those directly adjacent. There is one exception–when a mage casts any spell that creates a fire around the target. Lightning and Fireball do just fine. When a subsequent fog descends on the battlefield, the ongoing fires created by these spells burn so brightly, the rival champion hit by the spell lights up like a "welcome" beacon.

Some of the Environmental spells are extremely effective, completely immobilizing affected champions. However, when the wind kicks up, any Environmental spell cloaking a champion in clouds of smoke or some other concealing manner are literally blown away. Recast the spell if you wish to continue disabling rival champions.

Severe weather causes enforced rest periods for the competing champions. Both sides crash into exhausted heaps on the field of battle and sleep for part of a day. Scanning the mouse across the champions, you'll see that all have recovered some Strength. As mentioned before, if your party has a mage with the Nature skill, recovery is quicker and greater.

Battlefields Commands

As with the commands available from the Province screen, skill information pertinent to the various battle commands is presented in Table 6-4.

TABLE 6-4 Elevating and Potential Skills by Battle Command

Command	Elevating Skill(s)	Potential Skill
Move	None	None
Melee	Heroism	Might
Talk	Parley, Politics	None
Retreat	Heroism, Stealth	None
Challenges	Heroism, Might, Stealth	None
Defend	Heroism, Might, Vitality	None
Magic	Nature, Spells	None
Rest	Vitality, Nature	None

Move

Subject to weather and terrain factors, moving in battle is fairly straightforward. In clear weather, a champion's high in dexterity can move almost a quarter of the battlefield in a single turn. The effects of weather on movement was discussed earlier in this chapter.

After deciding on a character's destination, do not assume that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. The champion may have to move around buildings, impenetrable forests, or water to get where you want him or her to go. Experiment with the different weather conditions. Soon, how far and how fast a champion can navigate through all kinds of weather becomes second nature.

The name of this command should probably have been "Move and Melee," because a hand-to-hand battle can ensue if a moving champion ends up directly confronting or intercepting a rival champion. Although you don't have to fight an enemy you encounter when moving, the temptation generally is just too great to avoid. Unintended interceptions of rival champions, such as when you move through a blinding fog, automatically initiate person-to-person combat.

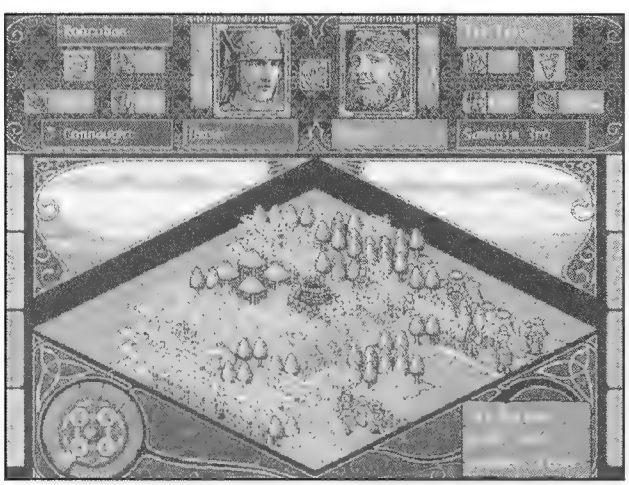


Figure 6-5.
A fireball heads straight for the intended target. Duck!

Free and extensive movement is the combatant champion's survival mechanism. One of the more irritating things that can happen when a cluster of your ruler's champions are stacked in the same area is the friendly bump. When this happens, your champion, according to the game, "bumps into one of your own." This instantly stops the champion's movement for that particular turn, a disastrous consequence if the champion was striving to save a beleaguered fellow party member only a few steps away.

Unless a moving champion is hampered by fog, take the time to plot out the projected course of transit. Make sure to account for the restrictive impact of buildings, structures, rocks, and slopes. Slopes look fun to navigate, but they prove murderous on rapid movement progress. You should probably avoid planning an attack route that includes a slope. Go around, rather than over, slopes.

Melee

Melee simply means a fight. Any two opposing champions essentially trying to occupy the same location on the battlefield will duke it out. The combatant champions must directly face each other or this command cannot be employed.

The computer calculates the damage each champion inflicts on the other during the fight. The metallic noise made by the smashing of weapons fills the air. Right before your eyes, the Strength and Soldier counts of the combatants diminish with every piercing blow. At your console, you can almost feel the pain suffered by your champion as the opponent lands one devastating hit after another. Armor is pierced and the flesh is cut.

Melees play out fairly quickly. Each champion gets in about two good swings. Most high-armed, adept champions inflict somewhere in the vicinity of 15 to 20 points of damage with each successful hit. The amount of damage that a champion delivers is determined, primarily, by the Arms rating of the respective fighter. Blows can even be deflected. Though you have no control of the deflecting action, which is programmed into the game, the desire to aggressively wield your joystick is completely understandable.

Not only do the bumps and bruises sustained during Melee reduce Strength, invoking the Melee command also produces a slight decrease in Strength.

Talk

This seems like a fairly strange command for the middle of a battle. In reality, the Talk command is multi-functional, and only two of the functions call for verbal eloquence.

Negotiate

This command gives the champion a chance to convince an opponent that it is fruitless to continue fighting the war. Show what a nice ruler you are; offer to strip the invaded province of every unit of the normal commodities found in the province. In exchange, you'll take your toys and go home.

If the invading force holds an overwhelming advantage over the defending force, this may very well work. On the other hand, if such an advantage exists, why would a ruler accept such a proposition? You invade a province because of its strategic position, not to get more food for the folks back home. So, finish the job and be done with it!

Only the battle chiefs of the warring parties can employ this command.

Taunt

If a taunt works, the next melee will put the taunted rival champion at a slight disadvantage. The exact nature of the advantage is not completely clear. On the other hand, if victory seems assured, taunt your brains out. The taunts are hysterical and reach new pseudo-macho heights.

Change Item

In the heat of the moment, a champion can proceed into battle with the wrong weapon. Hey, it happens. A ruler can't be expected to know everything and do everything absolutely perfectly. When this occurs, adjacent friendly champions can exchange items using this command, which consumes the transferor's turn.

Encourage

This command is valuable. From time to time, the overall abilities of the invading champions can be significantly reduced by an enemy spell of Decrease Morale. (Did you think that only your players could cast spells?) To readily remedy this, you must either have a mage cast an Increase Morale spell, or have one champion approach another with a little pat on the back, and some kind words. It works wonders. Either way, both Ability and Strength elevate accordingly.

Retreat

There's no shame in retreat. At times, this is the only smart solution to a battle gone wrong. Prestige is not impacted in any way, so what's the harm. Ability does go down a bit, but you'll get the #@$!@! next time!

The consequences of not retreating when you should are disastrous. Your allied champions defeated in combat might be caught. They'll probably join the winning tribe, not likely to be yours, if retreat was seriously considered.

Battle chiefs who cannot retreat are typically released and returned to the ruler in shame. The best action a ruler can then take is to send that battle chief, along with a few new champions, back to the invaded province.

Hand-to-Hand Champion Challenges

Hand-to-hand challenges are the tactic of the truly desperate. This command reminds one of a 1930s B-movie. The champions are egged on by their soldiers. After the appropriate gung-ho encouragement, the two champions face-off in the center of the battlefield, preparing to go one-on-one. No soldiers participate.

Why would any champion consent to this, unless the tactical situation in the ongoing combat is hopeless? If your champion has plenty of soldiers, rebuff this challenge with a derisive glance and go after the challenger.

There's another side to this story. When your situation looks gloomy in battle, give this command a shot, but not on any rival champion with a Mind rating of any consequence. Remember, you don't ever have to accept any of these challenges. No penalty attaches to "backing down" from one of these dares.

Defend

Use this command when a champion is low on Strength. Consideration should be given to renaming this command "Defend and Rest." The champion assumes a defensive position, and Strength elevates slightly, because with Strength so low, the champion can't move. Executing this command next to a rival warrior is about the best you can do if the situation is not going well. The Strength recovered is far less than when the Rest command is used during a battle, but every little bit helps.

Hopefully, a mage can cast a Heal spell and restore enough strength for the friendly champion to return to the attack.

Magic

That staff appearing on the Battle screen palette readies the selected champion to cast a spell. Given the immense number of champions in this game, it's sometimes difficult to remember which magician is a bard and which is a druid. Since the Spells, Rune, and Element combinations are completely different, depending on which mage class casts the spell, make sure you know which is which.

Lots of things can go wrong when a magic spell is cast. The selected combination of Runes and Elements can be incorrect. A low Mind rating decreases a mage's chance of successfully casting spells.

Chapter 9 explores combat magic.

Rest

Resting in combat restores Strength and Mana levels. Unfortunately, any wooden Runes broken during combat are not recarved until the combat ends. By then, it is definitely too late.

Surrender

One simply does not Surrender–not ever, under any circumstances. That's why the game gives you saved games to reload.

War Games

Wars last up to seven days maximum with four turns per day: morning, afternoon, evening, and night (28 turns.) Each champion, on whichever side, takes turns in combat, based largely on Dexterity. All champions on both sides get to take a turn, except those choosing to or required to rest.

Modifying Champion Placement

Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye automatically deploys your attacking champions side-by-side along the border of the invaded province. In the majority of situations, this presents no immediate danger to the party. Normally, all rival champions scatter across the battlefield far and away from your party. You take some turns before the competing forces meet to align your attackers, however the Terrain and Weather dictate.

The battle chief must first assure no defending champion lurks in the midst. Now and then, the terrain, buildings, structure, or even your own champions, camouflage the presence of a nearby opponent.

If you played your cards right, the province chief, maybe even the tribe's ruler, is smack dab in the middle of your champions. When this happens, count your lucky stars and skillful planning. Relish the knowing smiles of your champions. This war will be very brief, and victory will taste sweet. Without hesitation, send all warriors directly to challenge the province chief. Cast strong offensive magic spells from the mages.

General Tactics

The time has come to formulate an effective and winning game plan for the upcoming clash. Various tactics can be applied, but generally, you should send the warriors into direct confrontation with any rival champion, warrior, or mage. The weak-bodied mages should scatter to the distant reaches of the Battle Map. From there, pummel the enemy with attacking spells or heal the warriors, whichever is appropriate. Always target mages that seem to be casting Effect spells against your ruler's champions.

Rarely do rivals seem to cover all bases when attacked. During one battle, my mages cast devastating spells on the enemy champions for 15 straight turns, without an enemy champion within 200 yards. Remember, combat is turn-based. This is fortunate for those, like myself, who absolutely freeze when any hand-eye coordination skills are required in computer games.

Use the terrain and structures to your advantage. If a quick champion is low on points and healing is not possible, make the rival champions chase you around the

Citadel, Burg, or Tent. This might become a dangerous game of tag, but it may save the day for that champion.

Another strategy is to plant some champions behind some difficult-to-cross terrain. Sit tight and wait for enemies to slog their way through. This may take many turns. Have distant spell-casters pulverize the enemies with Lightning and Hurl Stones. The battle will be over before they reach you.

With Terrain varying greatly, use the lay of the land to your advantage. Know your champions. If the battle looks lost, it is very important to take steps to assure that none of the ruler's valued champions are captured because you've been unrealistic about chances for victory. Capture means possible exile, release to the wilds, or worse–the captive decides to join the victorious rival.

Know the Enemy

All rulers and province chiefs have distinctive battle plans. Some battle chiefs hang back, keeping a champion or two alongside for protection. Other head straight for your ruler. Nothing can stop the headlong rush, no matter how many of the ruler's champions block the path to the ruler. Still others hang back for awhile, then, as if impatient, stride forward, laughing in the face of instant slaughter.

Strength points are expended when you move in combat. The weather and type of terrain influence the size of the reduction of your champions' Strength that is brought on by the move. The amount of points expended can range from almost none for the weight-lifter types to 10 or even higher. The only way to really gauge this is to observe movement deductions from Strength. Weather definitely has a significant impact on the amount of strength decreased by movement. Slogging through mud caused by rains or the stumbles that fog bring take a lot out of a champion. At least with snow, no Strength points are affected, because no champion can move in snow.

Causing diversions is a viable combat strategy for the many battles fought before Balor is defeated. Bunching two champions practically next to each other is a red flag for rival champions. Sensing defeats of two for the price of one, some battle chiefs send all champions toward the bunched champions. This leaves the short-sighted battle chief defenseless.

Gang up on tough rivals. In all but a few battles, you will be opposed by champions stronger than any of those fighting on your ruler's side. Divide and conquer. Separate these battle stars from the remainder of the opposition and send two or three champions to execute the finishing blows.

Take a Breather

In combat, exhausted champions must be allowed to rest. Rest restores Strength and Mana. A mage bankrupt of Mana becomes a prime candidate for defeat and loss to the ruler's tribe. Just as your battle chief can scan the field of battle, so can the chief of the opposition. A Mana-less mage sticks out like a sore thumb.

There are good and bad places to rest. Resting right next to enemy champions with full Strength and wielding large clubs is definitely not a good place. To prevent this, never let Strength get below the 50 mark in combat. As your champion nears this mark, send this champion somewhere away from the close-in fighting. Head for the hills, and take it easy for a few turns, then rejoin the fray with renewed Strength.

The Terrain View feature is a handy device which allows you to exit in order to size up the battle situation when combatants start fighting so close that you can't tell who's a friend or foe. The slightly-magnified snapshot of the area may help identify the participants and make battle strategy easier to formulate.

Druid Heal spells can restore Strength to varying degrees. Continually track the Strength levels of your combating champions. Heal sooner, rather than later. Use protective spells on champions beginning to wilt. Three spells–Protection, Glamour, and Speed–are good examples. When cast, these spells cause a designation consisting of two initials to appear on the Battle screen's Status scroll for the affected player. For example, if a mage has cast the Protection spell, a green *PR* appears, providing ready reference.

It is best to locate mages far from the madding melees during warfare. Bad weather or shattered, higher-level energy runes can change this by severely restricting the range any spell can reach. When this happens, mages need to close on proposed targets, because bad weather severely reduces spell range.

When provinces governed by champions with delegated authority are invaded, *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* gives the player/ruler an opportunity to directly conduct the battle for the tribe. Always do so. Only the ruler has the savvy to overcome bad odds and win the day. Trust me! The delegated ruler always loses. Always!

Circle the Wagons

Rival champions have only the four cardinal directions from which to directly attack your ruler's champion. If the opponents deliver effective melee damage to your battle chief, try this tactic: Have four allied champions take up positions that completely surround the weakened champion.

This is called "circling the wagons" or "the champions' shield." Against the Fomors, this tactic works and might be essential to your ruler's survival.

Follow the Leader

When the battle chief of either warring party is captured or killed, the war ends. When your ruler invades, quickly converge on the opponent's battle chief and finish the job.

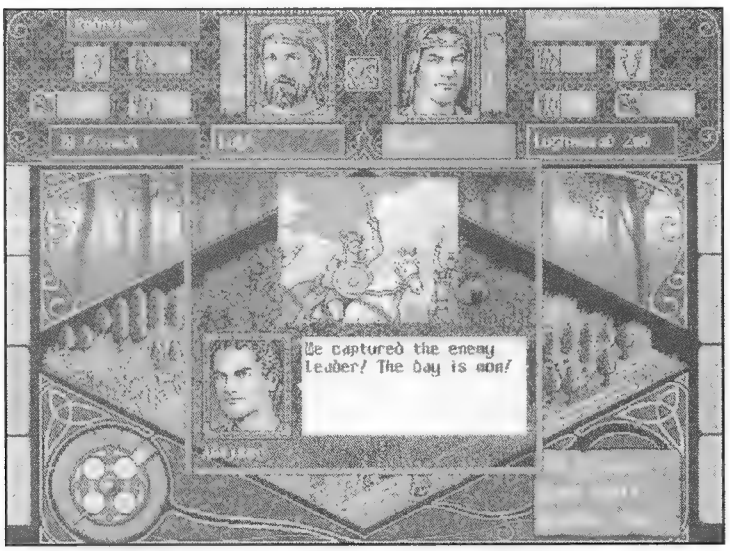


Figure 6-6.
Nuada still retains forces equal to Lugh, but Lugh went right after Nuada and won the day.

Figure 6-6 shows Lugh's in heading for the rival battle chief regardless of which other champions are on the field. While Nuada has several other champions to help with the province's defense, Lugh's tactics of focusing his attack directly on Nuada, the battle chief, worked perfectly. Trapped, with clear weather and wind playing no factor, Lugh won the battle without much difficulty.

The one drawback to this approach is that champion followers of the losing side will most likely retreat if an escape route exists. In fact, the only sure way to actually capture opposing champions is to defeat them via Spells or Melee.

When Conquest Nears

Elsewhere, I discussed the distinct possibility that a shrewd rival ruler may watch for your tribe to take on and complete a tough combat. When the combat ends, the rival swoops down on the troops trying to rest. This occurs at an alarming rate.

There is an easy move your ruler can make to utterly deflect such clever and predictable tactics. When conquest or even retreat is imminent, rest all exhausted champions before delivering the ultimate blow or fleeing to a neighboring friendly province. When your ruler then takes the target province or flees home, all champion Strength and Mana replenish. The champions then recover and are ready for action, prepared for any possible onslaught.

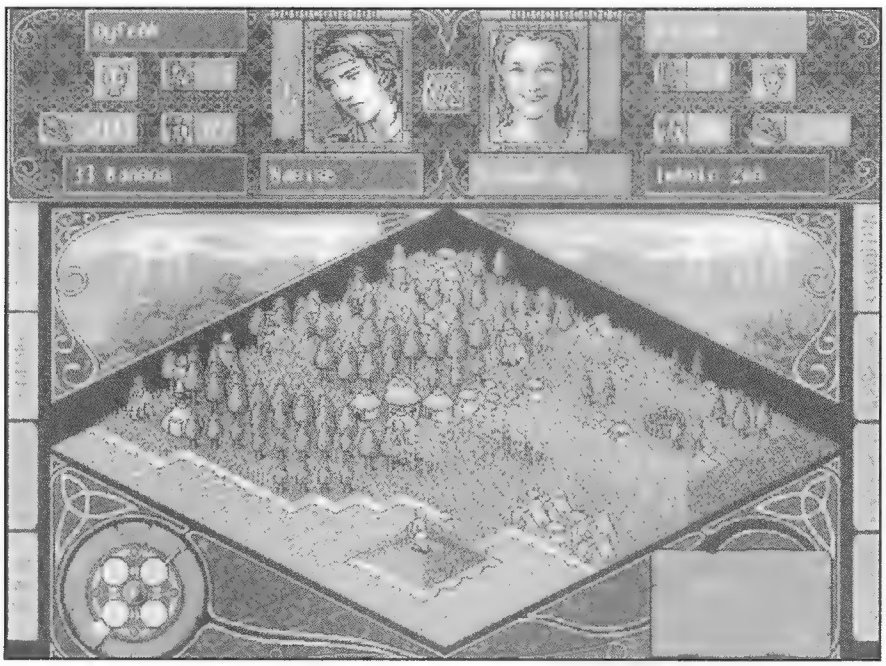


Figure 6-7.
Some of Sinnan Og's champions come into harm's way, right in Naoise's midst.

Defense Tactics

One of the best defensive tactics is to use existing structures to fend off or to block rival champions from getting at your champions. Protective structures provide an additional benefit: Observe how the ruler's champions head to the north along the eastern edge of the scene of battle. The Fomors undoubtedly give chase, but this permits the ruler's champions to take up strategic positions in the extreme western and south sections. This splits up the Fomors, making them much more vulnerable to defeat.

The attacker must take into account the defender's potential tactics. Any province led by the ruler of a tribe is likely to have a strong presence, as well as an effective and unified plan of defense. Provinces governed by low-level, weak champions will be pushovers. It is not unusual for such a champion, when faced with an opponent's presence, to arrogantly stride right into the midst of the attack. This brings to mind the modern term, "laughing in the face of death." Of course, almost no one in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* actually dies. The worst that can happen is exile, which a majority of champions, particularly rulers, probably consider worse than death.

Sit up and take notice if the province leader heads well away from your initial combat positions and is joined by several guardian champions. This type of clear intelligence does not bode well. Hopefully, your ruler has amassed a superior invasion force to neutralize this ploy.

All wars last a maximum of seven days. If the defender holds the attacker at bay that long, the war ends and the attackers must retreat from the invaded province. This slightly reduces the Ability of all invading champions.

Battle Drawings from the Hound, the Phantom Queen, the Fair, the King, and the Prophesier

Cuchulainn (the Hound of Culann), Morrigan (the Phantom Queen), Finn (the Fair), Conchobar (the King of Ulster), and Cathbadh (Prophesier of Dark Fate) are Eire's most revered, legendary heroes. Each, in their own special way, whether warrior or magician, epitomizes excellence on the battlefield. Their mere presence strikes terror into the hearts of those they fight.

Cuchulainn is the embodiment of the perfect warrior, as well as Eire's foremost authority on and practitioner of the hand-to-hand challenge. Morrigan (the Phantom Queen), a shape-shifter with her right eye closed in a permanent wink, is one of the Celts great warrior goddesses. Finn is a master strategist who regularly turns almost certain defeat into glorious victory. Conchobar shaped and trained a slew of Eire's greatest warriors, including Cuchulainn. Cathbadh, a druid mage, wrote the book on inventive spell-casting during combat. No finer teachers of the skillful arts of combat or magic ever existed in all of Eire.

A recent archeological expedition in what used to be the province of Connaught in western Eire discovered crude etchings carved in stone deep inside a dark cave. For many years, experts tried to interpret the etchings to no avail, that is, until three days ago. Sharoon Benn and Barei de Bedrique, famed husband-and-wife translators of the Toby Scrolls found the key.

It turns out the majority of the etchings are not writing at all. Most are drawings, actually blueprints, of the many battles on which the five champions forged their considerable reputations. Conchobar's celebrated artistic talent is evident in the drawings, for the blueprints depicted the battlefield terrain, down to the combative participants. A few crude phrases are scattered over the blueprints:

- *"To the corners, Finn!"*
- *"Reject that challenge, Conchobar!"*
- *"Lightning, Cathbadh!"*
- *"Run and shoot, Morrigan!"*

These notable drawings are the most appropriate references you can consult. Observe the heroes' annotations. Go forth and conquer armed with this knowledge. Your opponents will be the worse off for the knowledge you have gained from the legends. Visit the Nenagh library to see these treasures.

The Wake

When a hard-fought battle is over, the dust clears. Your ruler either won or lost. What happens then?

Victory

Sometimes, a rival champion pays the ultimate price for defeat. That final blow can cause the untimely permanent collapse of the victim. Somehow, even in the often cruel world of Eire, this seems unfair. For victims who survive, there's the dungeon.

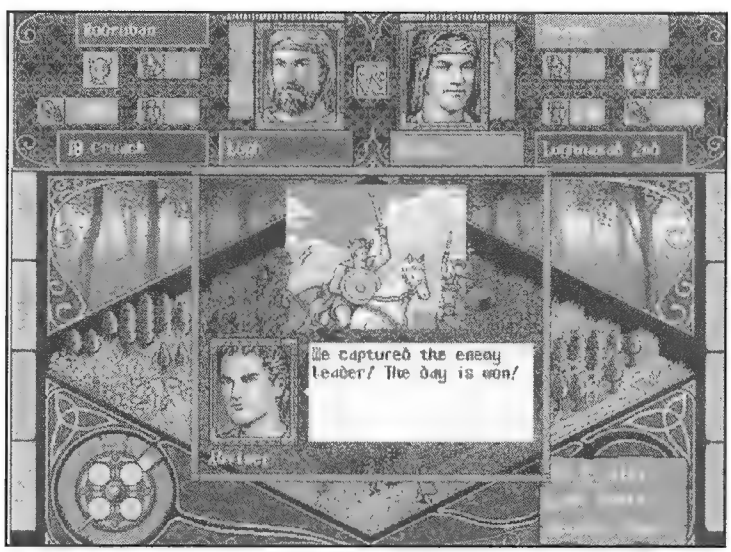


Figure 6-8.
Lugh decides what to do with the prisoners.

When the captured province is the last stronghold of the opposing tribe, victory destroys the tribe. The tribe's name is never again mentioned and eventually fades from the memory of even the eldest residents of Eire. To those cavalier enough to take such things in stride, that's one down and 17 to go! Moreover, victory enhances Prestige by a whopping 40 to 50 points.

If your rival is victorious, then expect some of the captive champions to take it personally and to desert the ruler for the victor. This depends, in part, on the battle chief's Charm level.

With victory comes the spoils. The enemy's battle chief gives up any item being carried. Head for the Treasury to give this item to one of your empty-handed champions.

Upon victory, the next thing to consider is the fate of prisoners–who are immediately thrown in the dungeon! From the dungeon, you can examine every captive champion.

Your prisoners face one of three fates:

- **Tribe** *As a rule of thumb, accept the services of all champions willing to join the tribe. No champion given this gracious opportunity after an ignoble defeat will ever turn on the ruler in the future. Besides, even if the champion offering to join the tribe does nothing more than trade grain or herd cattle, at least that captive won't be working against you for some other ruler.*

Figure 6-9.
Oscar looks like he wants to join Lugh. Why not?

- **Release** *This sets you up for a future confrontation, probably unpleasant, with the released hostage. Your prestige rises slightly if you show this kind of compassion. The one positive benefit is that, at the end game, the champion will be available to fight Balor with your ruler.*

- **Exile** *This choice is extremely drastic. The captive is forever banished from Eire and never allowed to return. Kiss this champion good-bye permanently from the game if the victor chooses this way of dealing with a captive.*

  Personally, as a kind and considerate ruler, a model for all to follow, your ruler would never exile anyone, unless, of course, he or she yaps at me. Pains in the butt are on the first train to Eire's version of Siberia! When this happens, another member of the exiled ruler's tribe becomes the ruler.

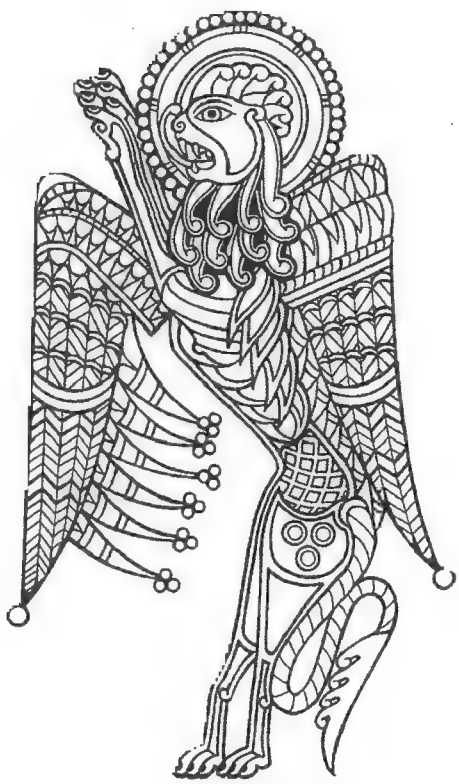
Defeat

No one likes to lose, least of all your valiant ruler. Nevertheless, defeat in war is inevitable, particularly in the first battles against the cunning, more experienced rival tribe rulers. An ignominious defeat causes your once-loyal champions to connect with the victor. Prestige also drops. The prudent ruler places a high priority on preventing this circumstance from happening with any frequency or preferably, at all.

Figure 6-10.
The seven-day war of attrition worked. The invaders skulk back from whence they came.

- *Eliminate the leader. The remaining rivals will fall.*
- *In order to take captives, you must defeat rivals in individual combat.*
- *Rest all champions before finishing a winning conquest.*
- *Retreat, if necessary.*

Chapter Seven



Diplomacy

Diplomacy uses Trading and Tribute to win over the rulers of other provinces to your side. Unlike War, which consumes huge amounts of the tribe's Grain, Diplomacy causes deep cuts not only in Grain, but also in Metal and Wood, as well as in Common Items and Famed Items. Rival rulers do not make or maintain a steady Peace with a tribe without exacting some measure of goods and services.

This method of unifying Eire affords one tremendous advantage over the war-like ruler's approach. Whereas diplomatic efforts allow the opportunity to annex multiple provinces at any given time, resorting to aggression usually limits you to a single province.

In most cases, limited resources prevent you from waging war on more than one province at a time. Therefore, with a belligerent conquest, you can only annex one province. Although a

ruler conceivably can undertake multiple wars against different provinces on a single turn, this is only practical later in the game, when you may have a surplus of champions and commodities.

Early in the game when other rulers have but a handful or just a single province, this makes little difference. However, in the middle to later stages of a game, some rivals might control five, 10, or even 20 tribes. Successful Diplomacy, via Trade and Negotiations, can bring a huge faction of allies into your ruler's domain.

In this game, the ruler, upon entering the Tribal Council, learned that these southwest provinces were all controlled by a single ruler, the noble Sinnan Og. Diplomacy began with a very charming bard, Ferghus, who possesses the Inborn skill of Politics. After a year of Tribute and Negotiations, Sinnan Og agreed to become a secondary tribe to the rulers. In one fell swoop, all six of Sinnan Og's tribes became one with the ruler's. Try that with soldiers!

Tribal Ranks

A foreign tribe can hold one of four different types of relationship with your tribe: known (explored) with no peace, known with peace, secondary, or oath-bound.

Secondary Tribes

A rival tribe pledges limited fealty to your ruler by becoming what is called a *secondary* tribe. This doesn't provide as strong a bond as oath-giving, but it's a start.

A robust Prestige advantage over the intended target goes a long way toward assuring a tribe's willingness to become secondary to yours. It is difficult to determine the necessary Peace level with certainty. Anything over the 50 to 60 range gives your ruler a chance to achieve the goal. Nothing terrible happens if an attempt to subjugate a rival tribe fails, except for a little wounded pride. Of course, you could send in a wave of invaders to ease your ruler's pangs of failure!

Oath Givers

Just because the ruler allies with a secondary tribe through mutual exchanges of Tribute and Commodities by way of Trade does not, for unification purposes, mean your ruler controls the tribe. To unify Eire and to qualify as High Ruler, the head of your tribe must receive an oath of Loyalty from the secondary tribe. Until then, the only other way to count the secondary tribe in the unification fold is to invade and conquer, a pretty rotten thing to do to an ally.

To convince the ruler of a secondary tribe's pledge of fealty to the ruler, continue along the Tribute and Trade route. It doesn't take very long, a few turns at most, depending on the Prestige advantage your ruler maintains with the ruler of the secondary tribe. When that ruler, or a representative, appears before your ruler to give the oath, you can take special satisfaction in having conducted the unification campaign in a way that required something other than brute force. Remember, a mind is a terrible thing to waste!

Never forget that, until a rival tribe ties an oath to your tribe, a back-stabbing sneak attack is possible.

Peace

The ruler's Peace rating proves particularly important to the diplomatic ruler. A positive Peace prevents opponents from attacking your ruler's domain. Conversely, a positive Peace can stop some of the more belligerent Eire rulers from completely ignoring the goodwill built by peaceful efforts. In this way, Peace keeps your ruler's rivals at bay.

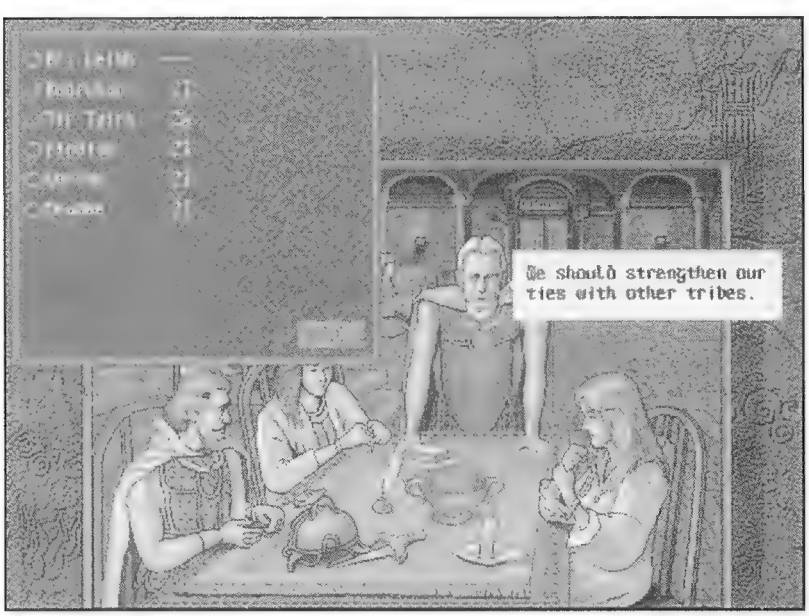


Figure 7-1.
Calatin, ruler of the Bri Leith tribe, is well on his way to establishing peace with many rival tribes.

The significance of this is self-evident. At many points in the game, the number of exposed borders of your ruler's domain becomes too great to protect with the number of available champions. At the end of a game I recently played, I had somewhere in the neighborhood of 15 exposed borders and 30 champions. Even if I dispersed all champions equally throughout my dominion, I'd have no more than two in any one province. Peace helps this situation by keeping your rivals at bay. Getting peppered from all sides with military incursions gives you a real headache. Buy time this way.

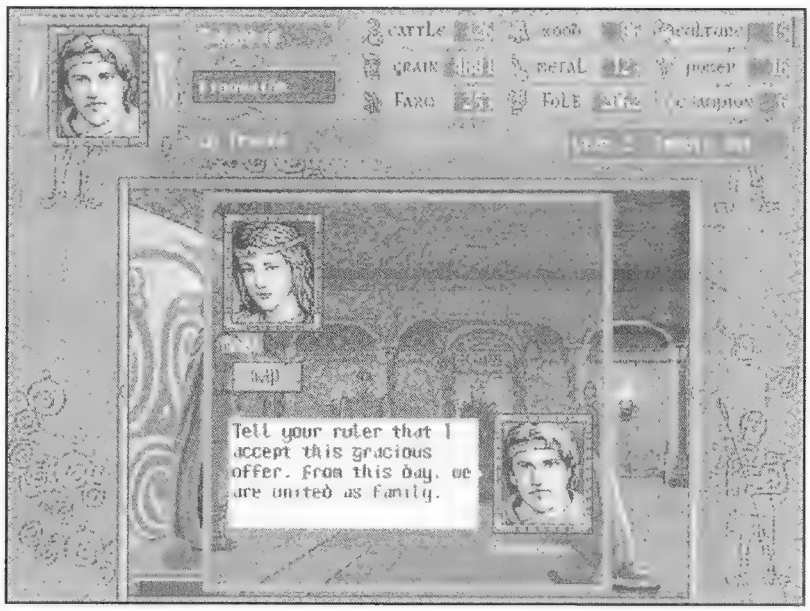


Figure 7-2.
Manannan's tribe becomes secondary to Medb's.

Of course, a positive Peace rating does not guarantee a rival ruler won't blow the peace rating away and attack. This is true even after a tribe becomes secondary, which only happens after a Peace level reaches the magic number 100.

One way to keep peace with another steadily-rising tribe is to assign one or two champions to do nothing but move back and forth between particular provinces, offering Tribute or Trade. Most rulers can't help but be impressed by this wherewithal and, as a result, won't attack.

Taking Diplomacy one step further, at times several of the ruler's provinces will be adjacent to several of a rival ruler's provinces. Turn after turn, assign specific champions the task of offering Tribute or Trade to all provinces of the rival ruler. In about a year, Peace should reach 100–a rating that almost assures no attacks and paves the way for a Recommend mission with an almost 100 percent chance of success.

Figure 7-3.
Lugh has achieved a Peace of 100 with three rival tribes. If Lugh continues to give tribute or trade with those tribes, their rulers may become oath-tied to Lugh.

Tribute or Trade?

An age-old question, to Trade or to Tribute is the subject of many champion campfire raps on cold Lughnasad nights. Unless the ruler lacks essential commodities, go the Tribute route. This seems to more quickly raise the Peace and eliminates that awkward moment of your emissary messing up trade negotiations. As previously stated, no ruler ever turns down free gifts from an opposite number.

Use Eire's geography to achieve a fast and, hopefully, lasting peace. If several of the ruler's provinces include nearby provinces with which Peace is desirable, start a Tribute and/or Trade shuttle. Bombard the Peace target with several offerings every turn for a period of a year or two. Within no time, you will achieve a 100 in Peace.

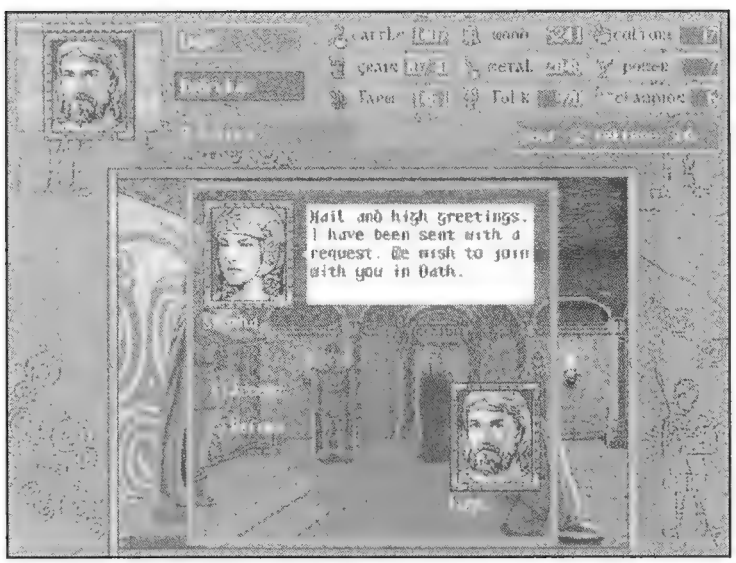
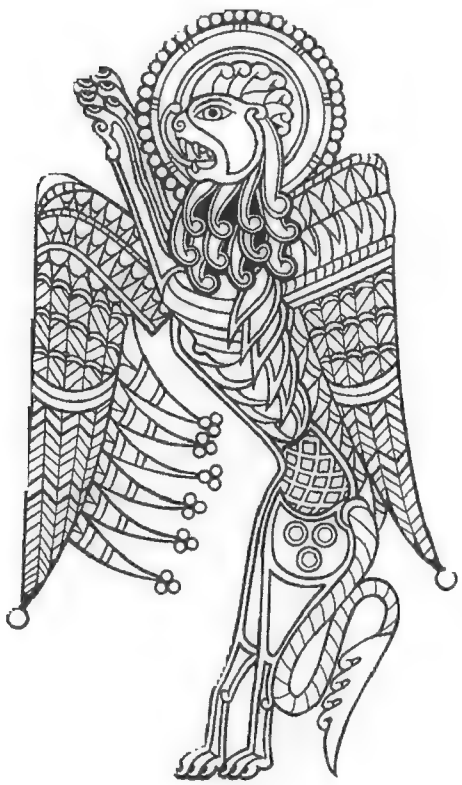


Figure 7-4.
A big day for Lugh. Skatha, the greatest warrior in Eire, has given the oath of her tribe to follow Lugh permanently.

At that point, send the champion with the highest Charm to the target tribe's ruler, using the Recommend command in the Treasury. If your ruler's Prestige is higher than that of the ruler whose tribe you have targeted for Peace, success is extremely likely–and a new secondary tribe will be added to your tribe's domain.

- *Tribute raises Peace more than Trade does.*
- *Oath-bound tribes are better than secondary tribes.*
- *Win over rulers with multiple provinces.*

Chapter Eight



Items

Three kinds of items are available for champions to use–Common, Famed, and Prized. Champions in a Burg make Common Items. The goddess, Danu, grants Famed Items. Prized Items must be earned in order to win *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*.

Common Items

Champions can enter a Burg and create so-called Common Items. Everything from swords to magical mirrors can be built. Wood and Metal, alone or in combination, are required to create Items, just as they are needed to build the province's Citadel and Burg.

Table 8-1 gives the specifics on exactly how Common Items increase champion attributes. Equipping or using every Common Item that can be created results in an increase in one of the permanent attributes.

One common item, the dagger, even increases two attributes at the same time. Fortunately, this gives you a way around the limitation that only a single item can be used or equipped by any one champion at a time.

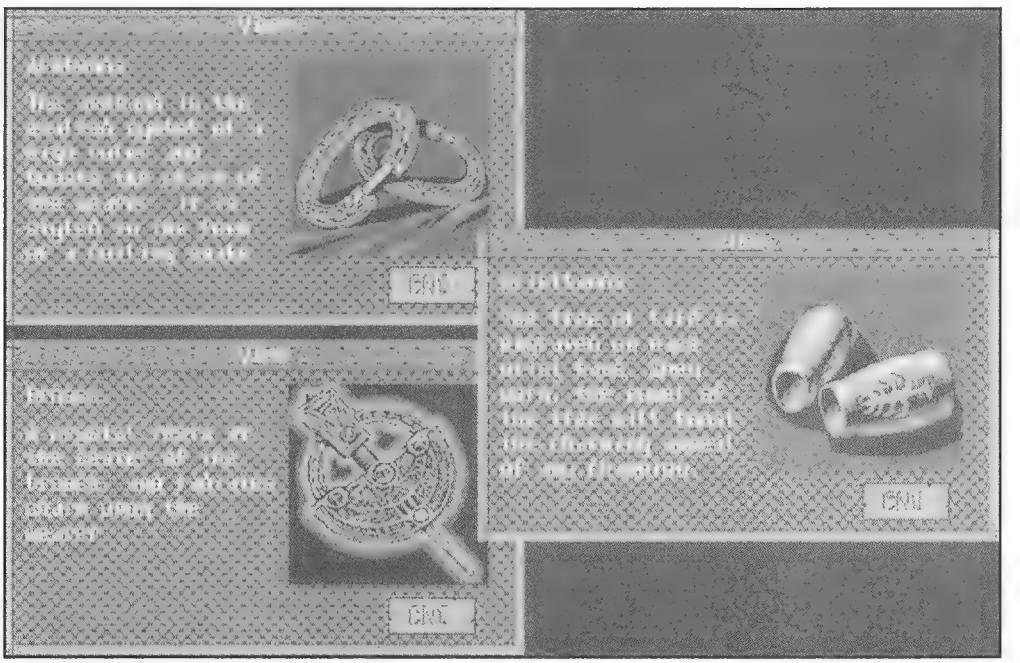


Figure 8-1.
Common items that enhance a champion's Charm.

TABLE 8-1 Common Item Attribute Increases

Item/Attribute	Arms	Dexterity	Mind	Charm
Armband	–	–	–	5
Brooch	–	–	–	15
Club	5	–	–	–
Dagger	10	–	–	10
Battle Axe	10	–	–	–
Horn	–	–	20	–
Javelin	10	–	–	–
Mirror	–	–	25	–
Ring	–	–	–	25
Spear	15	–	–	–
Staff	–	10	–	–
Sword	25	–	–	–
Torc	–	20	–	–
Wrist Bands	–	–	–	5

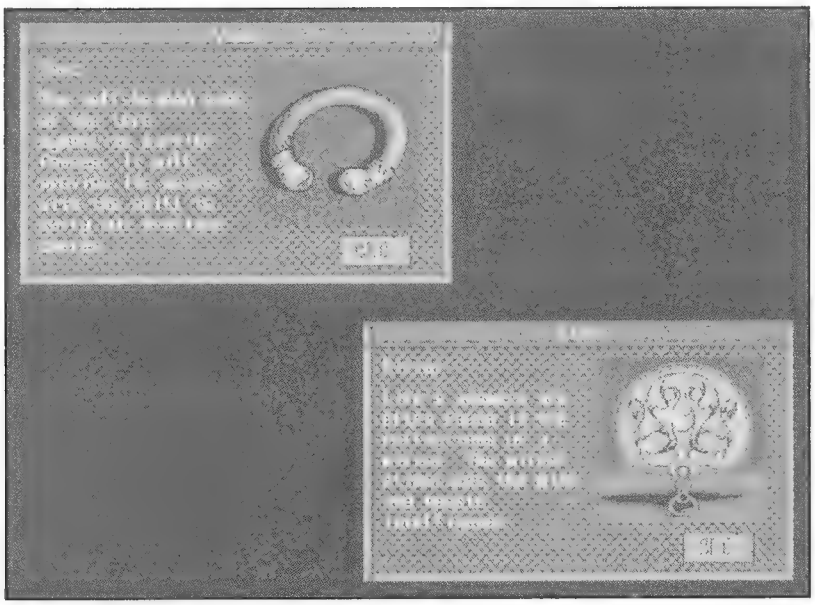


Figure 8-2.
The torc improves Dexterity.
The mirror is a real mind bender.

Rulers must assure that their provinces have sufficient raw materials to create Common Items. Table 8-2 details the precise amounts of Wood and Metal required to build each Common Item, as well as the time required to create each tribute (in months). Heed the footnote that champions with the Form skill expend 50 percent less materials in creating tributes than champions without Form.

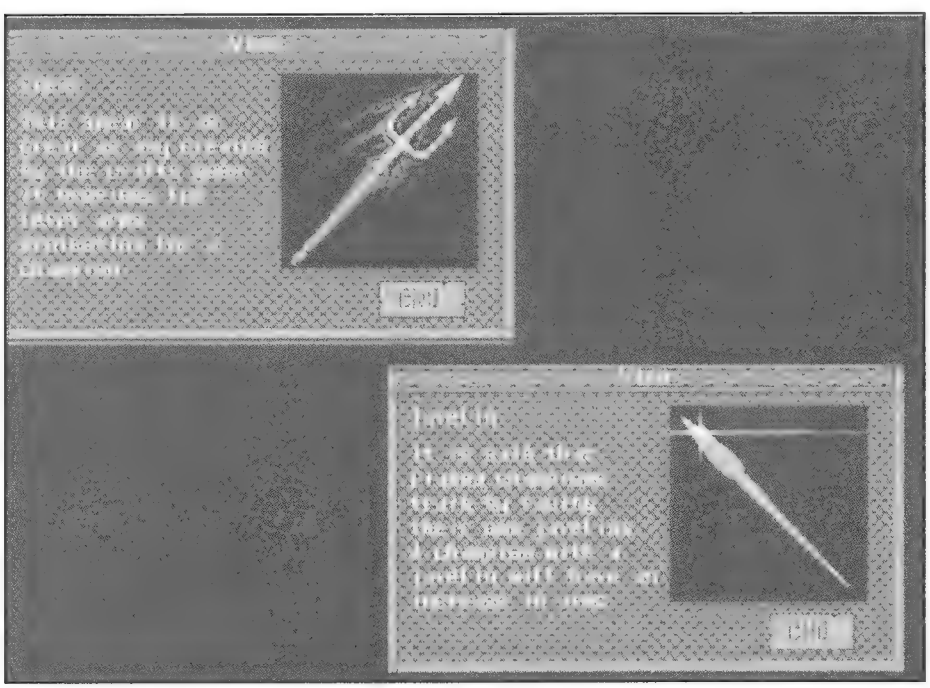


Figure 8-3.
The spear and the javelin increase Arms.

TABLE 8-2 Common Item Material Costs[1]

Item	Wood	Metal	Create in Months
Armband	0	60	2
Brooch	0	60	4
Club	30	0	2
Dagger	10	30	5
Battle Axe	20	40	3
Horn	0	90	5
Javelin	50	10	3
Mirror	0	60	6
Ring	0	60	6
Spear	50	10	4
Staff	30	0	2
Sword	10	80	6
Torc	0	60	4
Wrist Bands	0	30	2

LEGEND

1 Champions with the Form skill use half the commodities in creating an item.

Famed Items

The goddess Danu makes sporadic appearances throughout the game. Only she has access to Eire's so-called Famed Items. The Staff of Ferdia and the Stone of Might are just two of these valuable items.

These prized icons are sacred to the Eire population. Danu doles out these treasures to those rulers (yours or any others) who progress significantly toward unification.

TABLE 8-3 Famed Items

Name	Attribute Increase(s)	Remarks
Answerer	Arms and Dexterity +25	Invincible Sword
Fruit of the Wisdom Tree	Boosts Mind	–
Helmet	Strength and Dexterity +20	–
Pot of Dagdae	–	Unlimited Grain

(Continued on page 101)

TABLE 8-3 Famed Items (Continued from page 100)

Name	Attribute Increase(s)	Remarks
Seven Pigs	–	Reduces War Grain Need
Shield	Arms and Dexterity +20	–
Staff of Ferdia	Boosts Dexterity	Huge Enhancement
Stone of Might	Substantial Strength Increase	Strength x 10
Stone of Prayer	Substantial Mana Increase	–
Stone of Protection	Boosts Mind	–
Sword of Nuada	Boosts Arms	Boosts Strength Against Balor
Harp	Boosts Charm	–
Pig Skin	Boosts Strength	–
Three Magic Apples	Boosts Mana	Prevents Cattle Sickness
Wheel	Boosts Dexterity	–

Danu plays no favorites and apparently doesn't care if your ruler's notable progress results from a warlike or diplomatic approach. Some of these wonderful items boost more than one constant attribute at a time. Table 8-3 lists all the Famed Items and their effect(s) on the user champion.

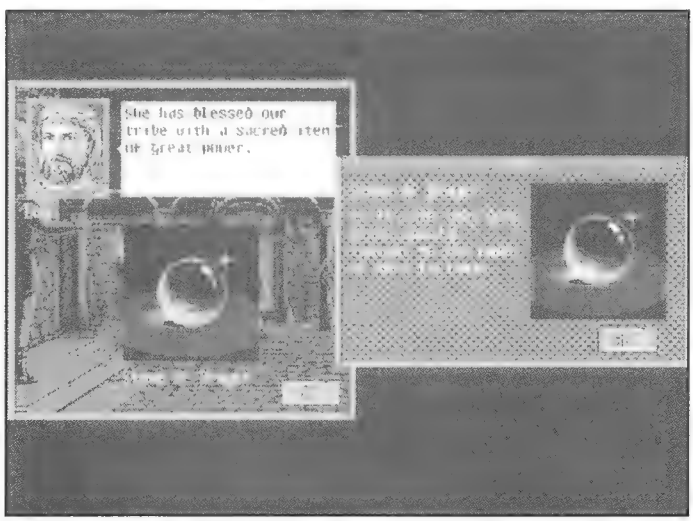


Figure 8-4.
Lugh gives the Stone of Prayer to a mage for unlimited Mana.

Prized Items

Only two Prized, or treasured, Items exist: the Lia Fail and the Gae Bolga. The Lia Fail is bestowed on a ruler who has attained the status of High Ruler. To obtain the Gae Bolga, you must do two tasks: First, dispatch Conann to exile, then defeat Balor. Then, you simply take the Gae Bolga from Balor.

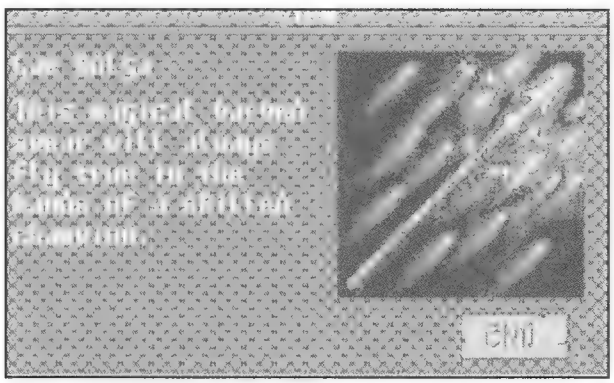


Figure 8-5.
The Gae Bolga, retrieved from Balor after the defeat of Conann. This flying spear hits with incredible power, enough to severely damage Balor in the game's final battle.

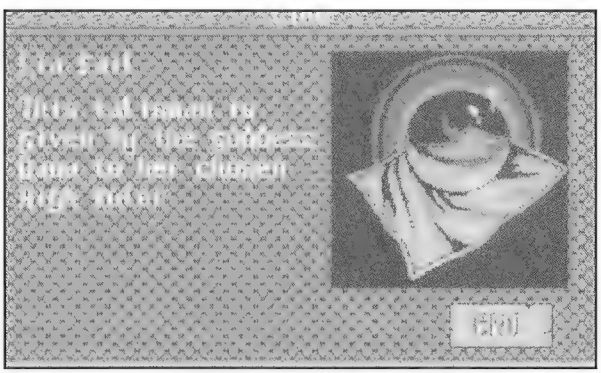
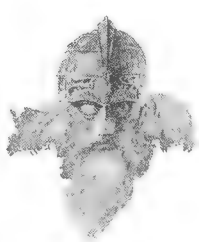


Figure 8-6.
The Lia Fail, Eire's High Ruler Symbol.

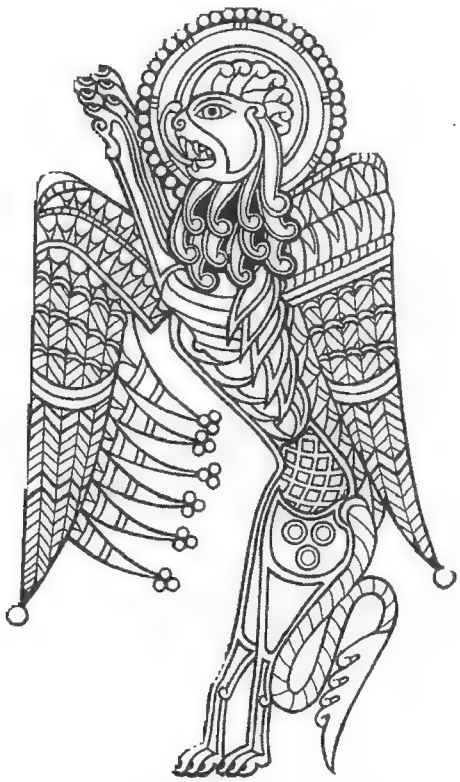
TABLE 8-4 Prized Items

Name	Attribute Increase(s)	Remarks
Lia Fail	Arms, Dexterity, Charm, and Mind +20	–
Gae Bolga	Arms and Dexterity +30	Conann's Spear

- *Items add flexibility to the Constant attributes.*
- *Famed Items often enhance more than one Constant attribute.*
- *The Gae Bolga makes Balor's defeat that much easier.*
- *Only a single Item can be equipped at a time.*



Chapter Nine



Magic

Magic is the key to unifying Eire. Your ruler can recruit and wage war with highly-armed, dexterous, heavily-escorted champions. Unfortunately, this behavior has little chance of prevailing and elevating your ruler to the coveted position of High Ruler. Give me a few good druids and bards any time, and I'll take on any tribe.

All mages carry a Rune Tablet with the 12 spellcasting runes. The top row displays the four Plane Runes (Astral, Terrestrial, Living, and Dead). The middle row holds the four Ring Runes (Ivy, Fiery, Icy, and Power). The bottom row contains the four Energy Runes, levels one through four. Casting a spell requires the magician to select a single rune from each of the top two rows of the tablet, then a rune from the bottom row for the spell's range. Then, one of the two elements at the bottom of the table must be selected.

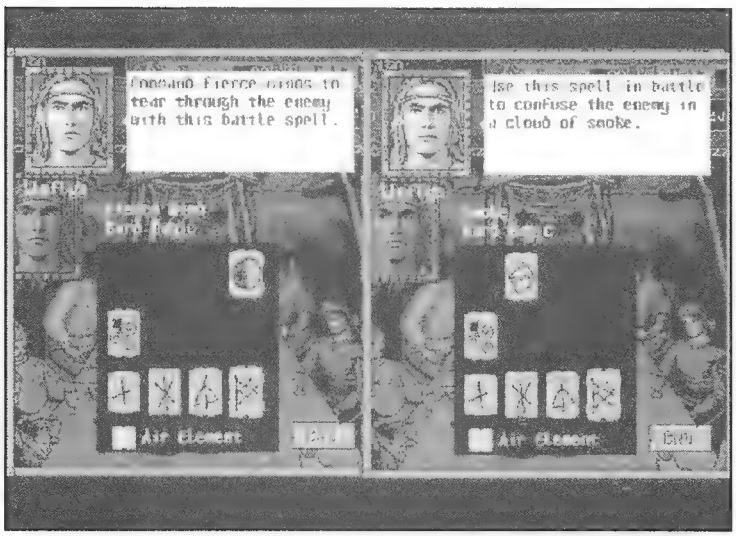

Command fierce winds to tear through the enemy with this battle spell.
Use this spell in battle to confuse the enemy in a cloud of smoke.
Air Element
Air Element

Figure 9-1.
Lleflys, the wandering Druid, teaches the bard spells of Fierce Wind and Smoke.

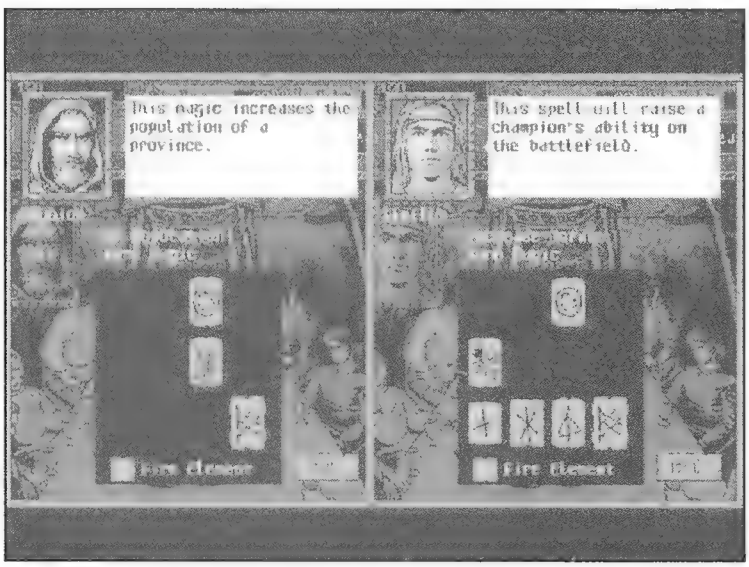

This magic increases the population of a province.
This spell will raise a champion's ability on the battlefield.
Fire Element
Fire Element

Figure 9-2.
Gwydion and Lleflys teach the ruler more bard spells.

In *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*, druid and bard champions under your ruler's wing can learn vital combat magic spells in any of the following three ways:

- *For 15 cattle per spell, wandering druids in the Champion Tent will teach your ruler's magicians.*
- *Waste about 20 real-world hours experimenting with the different combinations of spellcasting combinations with the breakable, wooden runes your mages possess. With all the variables and selection options, chances are fairly astronomical that you can learn many spells in, oh, less than two years real-time! I'm kidding, of course, but the game manual does advise that your time is better used elsewhere.*
- *Take a peak at the detailed spell charts on pages 111 and 113. See Tables 9-2 and 9-3.*

Ancient Runes, Elements, and Mana

For each spell, whether a Combat spell or a Province spell, you must select a specific combination of runes and elements. For example, the druid's Lightning spell requires the following: Select the second rune from the left of the top row, then the second rune from the left of the middle row, and finally, any range from one to four, depending on the target's distance from the caster. The spell is ready to cast when the druid selects the Water element. The name of the spell appears at the bottom of the Rune Tablet. If you selected the wrong combination of runes and element, the spell cannot be cast. When this happens, the mage wastes a turn, whether in a home province or in the midst of battle on foreign turf.

The Rune Tablets controlled by Eire's druid and bard mages serve as spellcasting workbenches. Every spell requires the selection of a single rune from each of the three rows on the tablet. After selection, if the caster has delicately and properly mixed the runes, the name of the summoned spell appears at the tablet's bottom. If the mixture is faulty, a series of archaic corkscrews (forerunner of the modern-day question mark) displays at the tablet's bottom–and nothing happens.

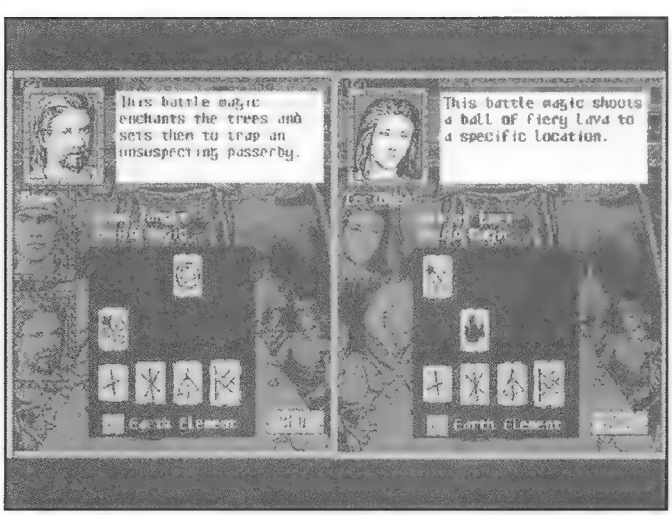

This battle magic enchants the trees and sets them to trap an unsuspecting passerby.
This battle magic shoots a ball of fiery lava to a specific location.
Earth Element

Figure 9-3.
Druids tutor the ruler's druids to cast Tree Tangle and Orb of Lava.

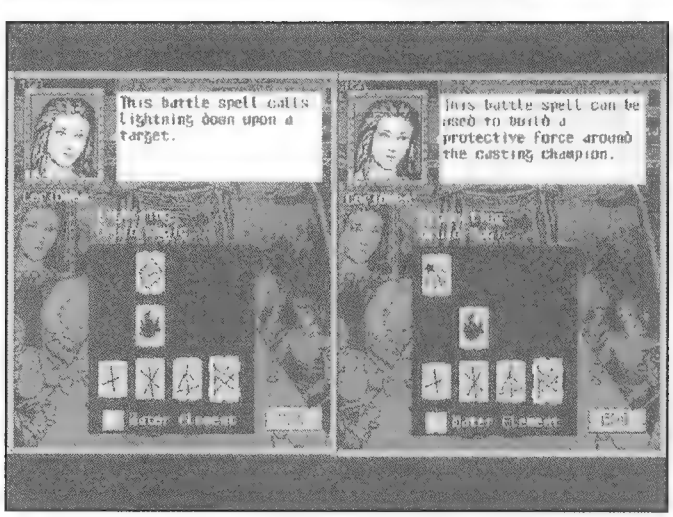

This battle spell calls lightning down upon a target.
This battle spell can be used to build a protective force around the casting champion.

Figure 9-4.
Lightning and protection place champions in good stead during combat.

Bear in mind that the Cancel button on the Rune Tablet is always active. It can be clicked after you select the three spell runes and the proper element. Make good use of the ability to withdraw rune selections, so as to ensure the desired spell is cast or if you decide not to cast a spell at all.

Runes

When selecting a rune, one must carefully choose between a fragile wooden one and an unbreakable stone one.

Wooden

Wooden tributes are fragile with a fatal flaw–the tendency to break. That's exactly what happens when mages and bards cast spells with these Runes. This usually occurs at very awkward moments, normally right after a magician casts a spell in combat.

Until that particular combat ends, the shattered wooden rune and any spell requiring that rune become unavailable for spellcasting. If a druid loses the Dead Rune, no more Heal spells can be cast in that combat, a definite disadvantage, particularly if that druid is the only spellcasting champion in the invading party.

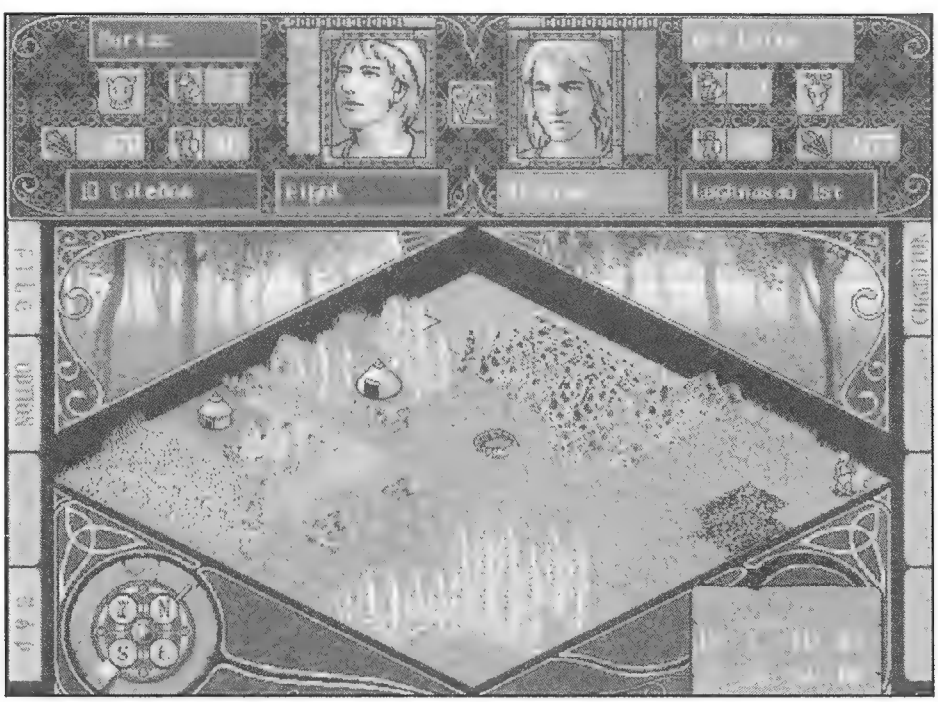


Figure 9-5.
Figol can cast a spell anywhere on the battlefield using the level four Energy Rune.

Even worse, weaker mages have been known to shatter several runes while casting a single spell. Balor laughs in the face of any mage who destroys wooden runes when casting a spell.

Return to the Burg and create some Charm or Mind enhancers. This should cut down on the constant breakage of wood runes. Better yet, try a rune made of a more durable substance, such as stone.

Stone

Stone runes are precious and few. Only 12 exist. At the start of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*, all stone runes are possessed by great druids and bard champions scattered throughout Eire. No champion has more than one, but some rulers control more than one champion with a stone rune.

Even though the wooden runes can be used to cast any magician's spell in the game, the stone runes provide a considerable advantage–they are unbreakable. That's the first thing you notice when casting spells. Unlike their wooden counterparts, no matter how incompetent or forceful a casting mage is, the stone runes survive.

This alone makes the stone runes extraordinarily valuable. But there's more! Stone runes used to cast spells increase the chances of the spell being cast properly and of having greater power. This maxim is especially true when preparing for the end game struggle against Conann and Balor. As a wise sage is fond of saying, "When Balor comes knockin', the stone runes will have you rockin'."

Figure 9-6.
Hallelujah! The defeated enemy gives up a stone rune!

Table 9-1 identifies the champion caretakers holding the 12 stone runes when the game begins. During the course of the game, the player's ruler and the computer-controlled rulers may force the original rune holders to trade them to other champions.

TABLE 9-1 Who's Got the Stone Runes?

	Rune	Caretaker
Plane		
	Astral	Doirche
	Terrestrial	Angus Og
	Living	Brigit
	Dead	Bran
Ring		
	Ivy	Emer
	Fiery	Creidhne
	Icy	Manannan
	Power	Cathbadh
Energy		
	1st	Sinnan Og
	2nd	Faun
	3rd	Onagh
	4th	Calatin

By the time your ruler achieves the crown of High Ruler, all 12 stone runes should have been found and passed on to your ruler and the ruler's immediate family of champions. Do not permit the stone runes to leave the ruler's side at any time. Guard the runes carefully.

One last word on the stone runes. I cannot overemphasize the importance of their acquisition. Some players may pick rulers who personally own or control champions who possess one or more of these valuables. Make this a high priority for your ruler.

One fact of life in Eire makes the job of acquiring the stone runes more difficult: At the beginning of the game, all the stone runes are possessed by kindred champions. Once the game begins, the only way you can obtain them is by forcibly taking them or undergoing the long process of Diplomacy.

Elements

Each bard and druid possesses two elements that are required for the casting of spells in their respective disciplines. For bards, these are Air and Earth. For druids, the elements consist of Fire and Water.

After the invocation of the Ancient runes, a spell can only be completed by selecting one of the two elements the mage possesses. When learning spells from a wandering champion, from trial-and-error, or from Tables 9-2 and 9-3, carefully note the required element.

Mana

The final ingredient you need to correctly cast a desired spell is sufficient Mana. All spells require a specific amount of Mana for casting. The higher the energy level of the spell, the greater the Mana deduction from the mage's stock. A Lightning spell cast at energy level one consumes 15 units of Mana, while the same spell cast at the much more powerful fourth level of energy consumes 35 units.

When the potential spell caster's Mana is insufficient to cast any available spells, the game dims the Magic Staff combat option, and the Mana status information glows bright red in the Status scroll.

Mana usually is in ample supply. If Mana begins to get dangerously low, the mage should find a safe haven on the battlefield and rest. In one turn, over 30 Mana units will be restored. The enforced lengthy rests that automatically occur during combat sometimes restore Mana to the player's maximum level.

Resting in the province away from the rigors of war restores Mana by approximately 10 points. Moreover, in the province, a mage with plenty of Mana can cast the spell, Transfer Mana, and bolster the Mana supply of a mage who's getting dangerously close to the "no spell" zone.

Combat Spell Books

The Combat spells of Eire's mages fall into these simple categories:

- *Offensive spells aggressively attack specific enemy champions. These spells reduce champion Strength and Soldier count to varying degrees.*

- *Defensive spells surround the caster or fellow champions with some type of protection against the onslaught of enemies.*

- *Environment spells change the battlefield environment by calling on the forces of nature to aid the casting mage.*

Druid Magic

In combat, druids are instruments of pure destruction. Deadly spells like Lightning, Hurl Stones, Orb of Lava, and Flood present the rival targets with a big problem. As your ruler's druids raise in Level (experience) and use items to enhance Charm and Mind, your invading forces become almost invincible.

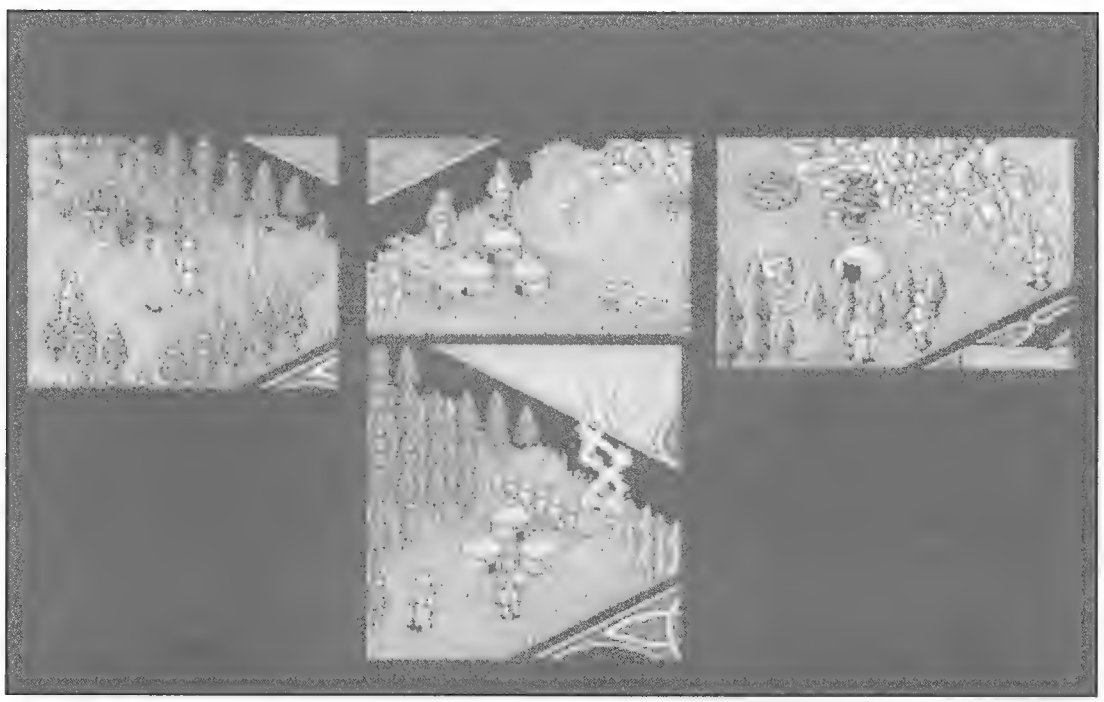


Figure 9-7.
Swirling clouds, lightning, whirlwinds, and floods–magic at work!

The information contained in Table 9-2 is taken directly from the spell book of Calatin, one of the most powerful druids in all of Eire. This table presents the exact combination of runes and elements, as well as spell effects and target damage. In the appendix, this spell book and that of the bard Senchan are conveniently provided.

TABLE 9-2 Druid Combat Spells

Spell	Rune Mix	Element	Payoff	Damage
Confusion	4, 4, 1-3	Earth	Immobilizes Target in Confused State	Soldiers
Extinguish	2, 4, Any	Water	Puts Out Fires	–
Flood	4, 3, Any	Water	Floods Ground Beneath Target	Both
Glamour	3, 4, Any	Water	Lets Druids Temporarily Fight Like Warriors	–
Heal	3, 1, Any	Water	Adds Strength	–
Hurl Stones	2, 1, Any	Earth	Throws Stones at Target	Both
Lightning	2, 2, Any	Water	Sends Lightning Flash Down on Target	Both
Orb of Lava	1, 2, Any	Earth	Sends Bolt of Fiery Lava to Target	Both
Part Water	1, 3, Any	Earth	Creates Passable Shallows	–
Protection	1, 2, Any	Water	Encircles Caster with Protective Force	–
Raise Army	4, 4, 4	Earth	Brings Back to Life Soldiers Killed in Battle	–
Tree Tangle	3, 1, Any	Earth	Sets Hidden Trap in a Forest	Both

LEGEND

Rune Mix Using the Rune Tablet as a guide, select the top row rune, then the middle row rune, and finally the bottom row rune. "Any" means caster may select Energy Runes one through four.

Damage Whether damage to target is to Strength, Soldiers, or both.

Some druid spells produce effects not readily apparent from the spell book:

- *Casting a Part Water spell, a druid can convert normally impassable water to passable shallows with a magic wave. The spell lasts for a few turns, after which the waters come crashing together again. (Moses would have been proud!)*

  From an offensive standpoint, druids–when deployed on an island within the attacked province–can use this spell to join the fray. Defensively, druids that have become dangerously close to being captured in a battle can cast the spell, cross over the shallows, immediately turn around, and face only a single rival. When the spell wears off, only a single hostile can reach your druid for melee. Spells, of course, can still be thrown at the druid, but the threat of physical attack will be eliminated.

- *Lightning not only appreciably reduces a target's Strength and Soldiers, but the spell also ignites damaging fires in the vicinity of the strike. Electrified champions who hesitate to leave the immediate vicinity take steady damage.*

- *Confusion is the spell of choice for any opposing champions doing substantial damage to the battle chief of your ruler. Confusion and the similar bard spell Hypnotize completely terminate the target champion's ability to move or to initiate a fight. Be careful; a hypnotized or confused champion can still defend against attacks. Immobilize the rival, then direct the jeopardized champion for rest and recovery to a nice quiet corner of the battle map.*

- *Raise Army is a straightforward spell. A certain percentage of the target champion's soldiers killed in combat return to life to fight again. (Look for the skeleton rising from the grave and listen for the church-like gong!) This spell cannot add soldiers to a champion's side. If cast in a situation where the champion has had no soldiers killed, it wastes not only the spell but that mage's turn, as well.*

Sad to say, no spells can be cast against more than one friendly or enemy champion. The chief mages of Eire apparently were too concerned over the depletion of Mana from the country. Perhaps Senchan, the Chief Bard of Eire, can be queried on this rather sticky point.

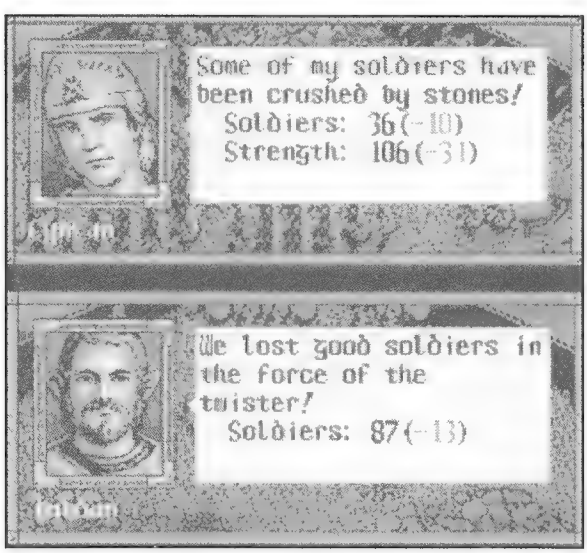

Some of my soldiers have been crushed by stones!
Soldiers: 36(-10)
Strength: 106(-31)
We lost good soldiers in the force of the twister!
Soldiers: 87(-13)

Figure 9-8.
Ouch! Two great champions are toasted by magic spells.

Successful spellcasting on a regular basis requires a high-level mage, preferably with one or more of the stone runes, a huge Mind, and lots of Charm. As those factors change, so do the chances for spells to work as intended.

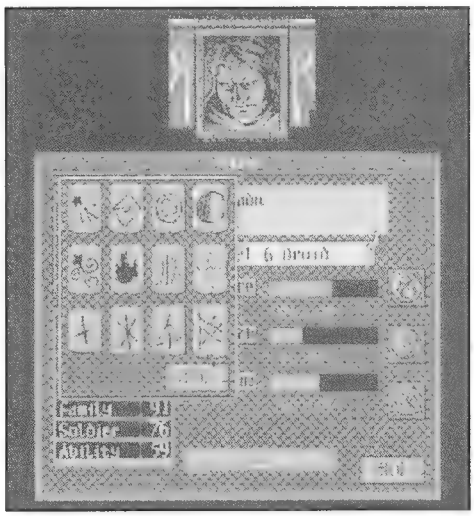


Figure 9-9.
Find and defeat Cathbadh, then the Power Rune is yours!

Bard Magic

Bards also possess strong spellcasting capability. This class of mage can also cast spells that do multiple kinds of damage.

TABLE 9-3 Bard Combat Spells

Spell	Rune Mix	Element	Payoff	Damage
Chaos	4, 4, Any	Air	Ghosts Soldiers of Fighting Will	Both
Decrease Morale	3, 3, Any	Fiery	Dampens the Enemy's Outlook	Soldiers
Fierce Wind	4, 1, Any	Air	Blustering Gales Tear Through Enemy	Both
Fire Trap	2, 2, Any	Fiery	Sets Trap on Farmland	Both
Fireball	1, 2, Any	Fiery	Hurls a Comet at Target	Both
Hypnotize	1, 4, Any	Fiery	Immobilizes Target	Soldiers
Increase Morale	3, 1, Any	Fiery	Raises Campaign Ability in Battle	–
Internal Fire	3, 4, Any	Fiery	Pummels with Fire of Caster's Will	Both
Poison Cloud	2, 2, Any	Air	Paralyzes Enemy in Deadly Cloud	Soldiers
Smoke	2, 1, Any	Air	Confuses Foe	Strength
Speed	1, 3, Any	Air	Increases Dexterity Temporarily	–
Twister	4, 3, Any	Air	Sends Cyclone to Damage Target	Soldiers

LEGEND

Rune Mix Using the Rune Tablet as a guide, select the top row rune, then the middle row rune, and finally the bottom row rune. "Any" means caster may select Energy Runes one through four.

Damage Whether damage to target is to Strength, Soldiers, or both.

Comments about the bard's available spells:

- *Successfully casting Chaos, the bard causes the target to become petrified of everything and everybody. The affected target roams the battlefield in a trance, losing Strength with every step. Eventually, the spell wears off, but not before a good commander makes sure the target is safely in the captive bin.*
- *Poison Cloud initiates an internal struggle among the target's soldiers. They go at each other's throats for as long as the spell lasts. The target's Soldier count gradually reduces to zero.*
- *Smoke thoroughly confuses the target to the point where positively no action can be taken. As with the druid's Confuse spell, cast this spell on any rival attempting to capture the battle chief.*
- *Bards can lay a circle of protective fire around a battle chief in imminent danger with the Fire Trap spell.*
- *Speed increases the overall quickness of the jacked champion, which generally results in extra swings during Melee. Friendly warriors needing just a slight leg-up in finishing off a rival are good targets for this spell.*
- *Hypnotize has another side effect not previously mentioned. Rival champions successfully hit with this spell gradually lose Strength until the spell wears off in a couple of battle turns.*

Wasting Spells–Fizzle, Sputter, and Whoops!

"Whatever can go wrong, will go wrong!" say the noble soothsayers. They must be referring to the tremendous number of failures a spellcaster experiences when trying

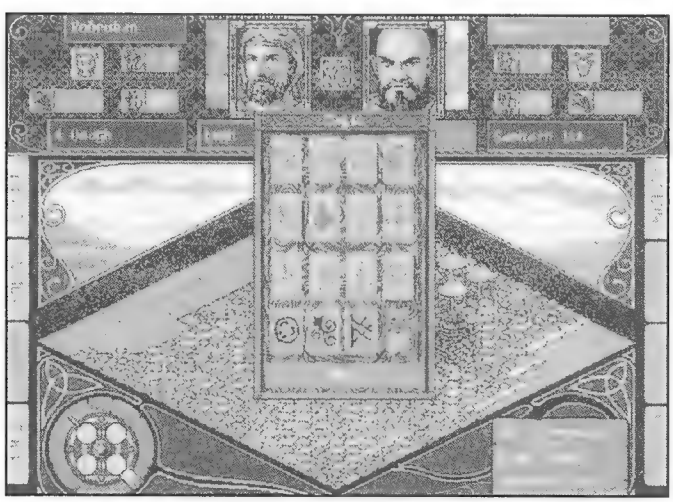


Figure 9-10.
One of Lugh's druids successfully mixes the runes and elements to cast the Heal spell.

to throw a simple spell. Why do your spellcasters sometimes act like amateurs? Surely, you couldn't have accidentally clicked on the wrong combination of runes!

Certain factors hidden from all mages increase or decrease the chances of a successful casting. The higher a mage's Mind, the better the chance for hurtling that Orb of Lava or Lightning towards a 7 foot, 5 inch warrior bearing down on him or her. Two things primarily cause a spell to miscarry: selecting the wrong runes and elements required to cast the spell, or the mage simply loses control of the runes. High mind and Charm reduce the chances of a mage losing control. Weaker spellcasters continually break up the Rune Tablet in such a short time that they become nothing more than cannon fodder for the rest of combat.

Then, there's the miscalculation of the range needed to reach the intended target. The bottom row of the Rune Tablet consists of the four Energy Runes that determine the scope of a spell's repercussions. The debilitating effects of weather on the range of a spell are discussed in Chapter 6. When the Energy rune selected does not go the distance to reach the intended rival target, your Adviser calmly informs the caster that the turn is over!

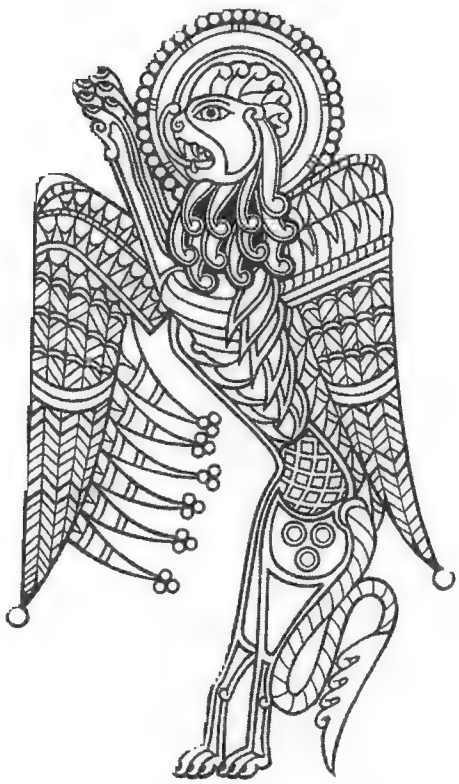
The heat of battle is no time for magicians to frivolously waste a combat turn casting a spell. I'm not talking about losing control of or mismatching the runes. I'm talking about attempts to cast spells that have no effect. The prime examples:

- *Casting Heal when the target is already at the maximum Strength.*
- *Casting Raise Army when none of the target's soldiers are dead.*
- *Casting any spell at too low an Energy level to reach the target.*
- *Casting any spell in Fog, unless the spell is cast on the mage casting the spell or on an adjacent champion.*
- *Casting Part Water far from water.*

Remember:

- *Stone Runes rule.*
- *Wooden Runes reform after combat breakage.*
- *Be sure to cast spells that improve the province. Though not as devastating as combat spells, it's far more entertaining.*
- *Wasting spells is a sure road to defeat.*
- *Heal any fellow champion with below 60 Strength, particularly if the champion is adjacent to a warrior with 220 Strength, 110 Dexterity, and a smile on his or her face.*

Chapter Ten



Insider Winning Strategies

By now, the early observation in the beginning of this book that it's not possible to provide a single, unfailing walk-through of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* should be painfully obvious. A statistician would have a field day with the number of game variables that impact ruler performance and progress toward successful game completion. However, even though no step-by-step exposition is practicable, many strategic approaches exist to help you advance at a reasonable and favorable rate, and eventually win the game.

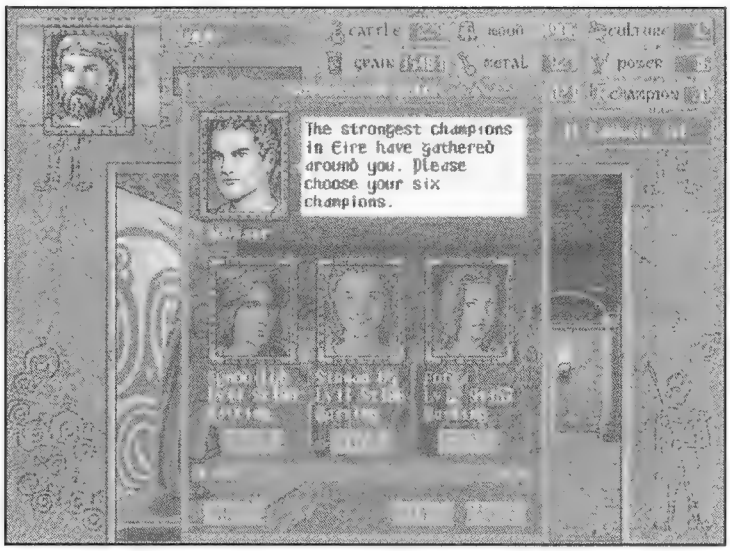


Figure 10-1.
As the end game nears, Lugh can pick any champion, including rulers, who have not been exiled during the game.

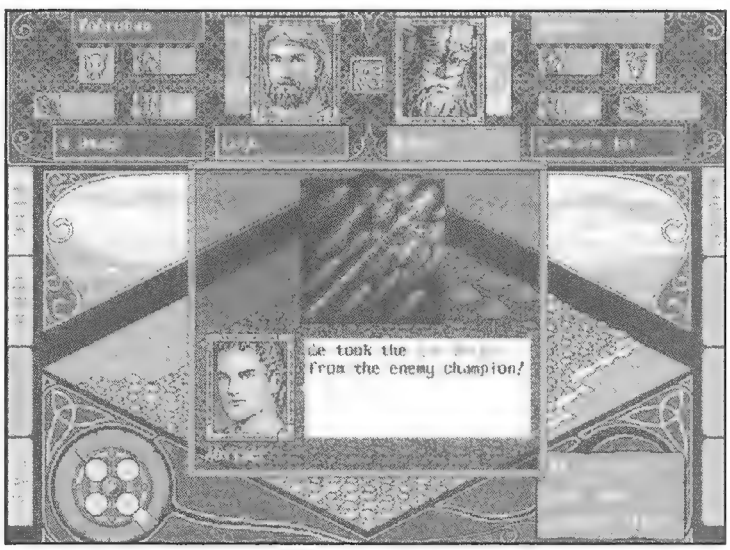


Figure 10-2.
This is what Lugh needs to accomplish before the final battle with Balor.

Grand Schemes– Earning the Title of High Ruler of Eire

Previous chapters discussed basic strategies for progressing through the game. The following tactics are more advanced, requiring the player to think in terms of the long run.

Dummy Province Ploy

If a ruler controls plenty of provinces, a sizable chunk of Eire in the hip pocket, and a surplus of resources and commodities, consider this: Provinces no longer in jeopardy from outside interference can be abandoned, so their champions can be dispatched to a province needing resources or a champion boost.

Unless a rival tribe overruns one of the provinces that border the now "dummy province," no further action is required. Empty provinces count as belonging to the ruler who controls all of the occupied provinces at the end of the game.

Charming Roving Ruler

Elsewhere, Experience Level and Charm prove important in convincing wandering champions to join the tribe. Ordinarily, the actions taken by rulers make for rapid advancement up through the Experience Levels. Combine that with the fact that most rulers are high in most of the inflexible attributes, of which Charm is one, and the advantages of a ruler trying to recruit is clear. Additionally, any of several game items can boost Charm to a limit of 150.

For these reasons, it is to your advantage to send your exalted Princess or Prince Charming on a magical mystery recruitment tour. Arrange for plenty of protection. Place your most capable champions to take the ruler's place for the long journey.

Do champions still regularly drop by your tribe's province but continue to obstinately refuse to sign up? The simple cure: Dispatch your own high and mighty ruler on a recruitment tour of the tribe's provinces. You'll be pleasantly surprised when champions begin to sign on like crazy. Even with extremely high Charm and Level, the ruler probably will be unable to recruit some of the champions, particularly those who have reached Level 15, the game's maximum.

Gonzo Home Province

Avoid headlong conquest rushes into the Eire's heartland, at least until the ruler gains lots of champions and Prestige. Keep everyone close to the vest. It is better to have a huge province strong and impregnable than a bunch of cheap imitations.

Building up a solitary strong province to the exclusion of expansion, like all strategies *in Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*, requires an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages.

On the plus side, a province's commodity storage limit is almost unreachable. Further, there's room for every champion the province chief can recruit, although only 10 champions can frolic in the great outdoors at any one time. The extra champions hang out in the Citadel. (More free food!)

While Experience increases earned from domestic tasks hold less value than military or diplomatic gains, steadily performing several monthly domestic chores in a single province eventually leads to higher Experience for all participating champions. Once the flourishing province reaches a practically impregnable position, strike out to conquer with the elite champions who you so carefully brought along in this manner.

However, this approach is fraught with several dangers that must be considered. The worst one is that, if invaded and conquered, there's no place to run and hide. The game ends as your ruler is skyrocketed to exile.

The Celtic Rim

Figure 10-3 is what some venerable historians would call the perfect example of an "unassailable territorial rim." Since *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* takes place in Eire, this example is referred to as the Celtic Rim.

In geographical terms, a rim is a half-moon provincial border made up of many individual units (provinces in Eire) that present a strong front-face to the rest of the known world. Ancient military conquerors preferred expanding in the sweeping semi-circular direction depicted in the figure. The effectiveness of the rim was always measured by the lowered number of boundaries exposed to the rest of the world.

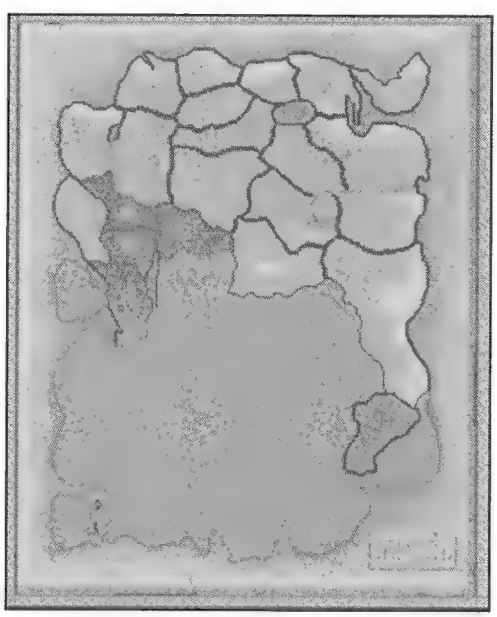


Figure 10-3.
The Celtic Rim at its best.

Figure 10-3 amply demonstrates the effectiveness of this strategy. In Figure 10-4, the ruler has cleverly conquered territory along the northern extremity of the island. Only six foreign provinces can attack. That number is actually smaller, because those six provinces belong to only three tribes. Establishing an equitable Peace with two of the bordering tribes gives the ruler a measure of protection for dealing with the remaining tribe on the rim. This approach works like a charm and clearly proves that hitting the rim beats a slam dunk.

The "Funnel Theory" (below) unveils a logical adjunct to the Celtic Rim stratagem. Rulers in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* should carefully study the Celtic Rim and implement a similar scheme to unify Eire and qualify for the title of High Ruler.

Figure 10-4.
Beginning stages of the Celtic Rim strategy in action.

Funnels

The Funnel Theory perfectly complements the Celtic Rim theory. What do provinces 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 38 in Figure 10-3 have in common? Every one of those provinces has no foreign province on any of their borders. As such, these provinces are completely protected from attack by a rival tribe.

Start sending all resources to the provinces bordering the front of the Celtic Rim–provinces 6, 7, 13, 14, 19, and 20. Leave the supporting provinces with just enough raw materials to survive.

When the ruler decides to expand the rim outward by conquest, funnel all personnel to the front provinces (see dummy province ploy). Abandoning the provinces will definitely result in a severe plunge in Prestige. They can always be resettled, bringing Prestige up to the current level, once the invasions have stopped. In any event, high Prestige is for diplomats. Anyone employing the military way by conquering on the road to unifying Eire could give a hoot about Prestige.

After the invasions, it's a good idea to reestablish the abandoned provinces. Try to assure that champions with skills enhancing domestic resource duties–such as herding, mining, chopping, and building–are selected for resettling. Within a few months, for those of you who wish to pursue diplomatic initiatives, the resettlements will have occurred, and Prestige returns to its position immediately prior to the funneling.

Two for the Price of One

Summing up, a combination of the Celtic Rim and the Funnel theories provides a powerful and devastating approach to unifying Eire and becoming High Ruler. This

does mark your ruler throughout Eire as extremely hostile in nature. Of course, no one ever hears about the good things the ruler does. Why, just the other day the ruler threw a big birthday bash for the Adviser's youngest daughter.

Magnificent 7

Impressive champions abound in Eire. Many and varied talents are needed to help your ruler progress to the top of the tribal heap. There comes a time when the ruler begins to rely, time and again, on the same champions to perform delicate tasks. Lugh, the head of tribe Rodruban depends heavily on Ferghus, the remarkably versatile bard.

Gather and recruit a top-notch cadre of champions. Let them conquer and wax diplomatic together. Over the years, as all of them and your ruler soar toward the coveted maximum Level 15, they evolve into the ultimate team. Combats become easier to conduct. It no longer becomes necessary to continually consult the View command to figure out what spell that recently-recruited champion can cast.

As the end game approaches, the team prepares for Balor and the evil one's lackeys. All the Stone Runes are found and distributed to the dream team's mages. No shattered Rune Tablets are tolerated when the chips are down.

The Big Picture

New rulers need to formulate a broad master plan to hasten the unification of Eire and to become High Ruler. Long-range thinking is important, but you need to set intermediate goals, as well. Consider the consequences that movements made in the first few years might have on the situation five years down the road. Naturally, the Fomors, too, have a specific unification goal in mind, but achieving the title of High Ruler is not one of them.

A principal focus of the new ruler should be to understand your rival rulers. All rulers go after the same brass ring. Different rulers act, well, differently. Watch for behavior patterns. Some rulers are passive and welcome peaceful overtures; others take your Tribute, establish a seemingly non-hostile relationship, then attack a province left poorly protected in full confidence of the soon-broken alliance.

Possibilities of betrayal and tragedy are great. Your ruler should strike a delicate balance between bludgeoning and diplomacy to achieve objectives. This makes for a bewildering array of challenges and choices.

Expansion should be measured and slow. It's better to have a few strong provinces, particularly in the early years. This tactic proves far more practical than stockpiling a larger number of weaker provinces.

In the role of conqueror, your ruler needs to shrewd. He or she must size up the computer-directed opponents. As previously mentioned, some rivals act rather foolish, while others make you look like an amateur.

Unless an important alliance must be forged or a distant province is desperate for supplies, resist the urge to send champions, particularly the ruler, on multi-month tasks. Try to limit the time expended on any one task to one month out and one month back. Tying up champions on lengthy journeys can seriously deplete a ruler's governing options for a substantial length of time.

If your master plan is working, the ruler's Prestige, Ability, and Peace levels all progress upward at a nice, steady rate. At some point in the game, possibly when the ruler controls one-third to one-half of Eire, a snowballing or domino effect comes into play. Suddenly, the ruler is approached by opponents who used to spit on the ruler's shoes. Power is everything in this game. Take advantage of this newfound celebrity and, if you're mounting mainly military actions, switch to the diplomatic.

Table 10-1 gives my subjective judgment on the overall demeanor on those Eire rulers whose conduct seems to fall into a consistent pattern. The other rulers simply don't fit into any specific category.

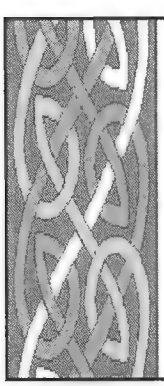


TABLE 10-1 Ruler Demeanor

Peaceful	Middle-of-the-Road	Hostile
Sinnan Og	Lugh	Finvarra
–	Cuchulainn	Curoi
–	Medb	Conchobar
–	–	Ilbreach

Money plays no part in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*. Presumably, the Celts didn't consider money, or what passed for money in those days, significant. Cattle, metal, and wood were the actual things of value to the Eire tribes. Recruited champions were not even paid, but labored out of devotion to the ruler–or because of a guilt trip from all the freebie meals served at the Champion Tent before the former wanderer allied with the tribe.

Make friends, influence people, and conquer enemies. Alliances with all neighboring domains are crucial to the protection of the tribe. This is especially important as a ruler expands, laying the tribe open to danger from numerous sides. The ultimate goal is to unify all of Eire, by hook or by crook.

In the end, you, as the player, are in the best position to judge whether a warlike, diplomatic, or balanced approach is right for the particular game situation. All of these approaches carry both benefits and detriments.

Good luck!

The Climactic Showdowns

The *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* end game is an exhilarating and exhausting experience. Each of the final battles usually consumes two real-time hours, but what glorious battles they are!

When your ruler becomes High Ruler of Eire, Balor turns apprehensive about the islanders' growing strength and potential future resistance. Balor enjoyed orchestrating his minions' regular pillage of the Eire provinces, particularly the humiliation the raids brought on Eire's rulers. The reprehensible new year's raids tax and tribute seizures are especially gratifying to the Fomor ruler.

Holed up in his Tory Island Citadel, Balor plans to inflict the ultimate humiliation on Eire–the complete defeat and exile of all its rulers and champions. He initially decides to lead the attack himself, but determines the better course of action is to send Conann, his second in command and King of Fomors, to finish the job.

Balor licks his chops at the prospect. With all the great champions in Omagh at this very moment, if Conann fails, Balor himself will lure the islanders to Tory Island, the evil one's home territory. They don't stand a chance against his hand-picked cadre of the mightiest of Fomor champions that he has chosen to destroy the islanders.

The time has come . . . .

Sladcik Hughes Guidebook for the Upwardly-Mobile Champion

Eire camouflages many secrets. Discoveries of ancient writings are always greeted with fanfare and jubilation at festivals held throughout the island at various times of the year.

One such find created a cause for special celebration in that distinguished class of Eire residents called champions, especially those champions with visions of someday becoming tribal rulers. Deep in Raven, the province at the southeastern tip of Eire, a tiny, untitled tome surfaced during a routine mining operation.

The finder could not read, so the province's ruling champion, Jen of the House of the Lesser Stewart, was summoned. Those who witnessed Jen's initial reaction while skimming the tome will never forget what happened next. Jen's eyes floated upward, deep into the recesses of her head. She fell to the ground, stunned beyond movement.

You see, the tome contained snippets of invaluable advice which, if followed, almost guarantees ascension of a champion to the position of High Ruler. Jen's reaction was caused by her realizing all the mistakes she had made in governing her provinces.

The celebrated Lugh, Eire's most powerful ruler at the time, named the tome *Sladcik Hughes Guidebook for the Upwardly-Mobile Champion*. Sladcik Hughes lived in Tralee

and was most noted for coining the word "strategy." Many an Eire champion has stood in good stead from the invaluable knowledge imparted by this guidebook.

Several pithy extracts from the guidebook's decorum and statistics chapters were recovered intact, but the real value of the discovery was a mysterious briefing. The tribe's ruler told of strange ramblings, something about a battle with a menace to Eire. At the time, with Eire at peace, not much attention was paid to this–until now.

Balor's emergence and eventual stranglehold over Eire has made study of this historic document a must. The complete text of this briefing was lost in the great tribal wars that passed well before the time period when the events of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* happen.

The guidebook proffered this wisdom:

Before your ruler makes that last peace pact or wins the final battle qualifying him or her for High Ruler status, draw close and heed these ancient words.

- *Accept the title of High Ruler only after your ruler has reached the maximum Experience Level of 15.*
- *As your ruler nears the inevitable clash with the evil titan, start thinking logically about which six champions you want at your side when the time comes.*
- *Ensure all Famed Items have been gathered and are safely stashed in a province Treasury available for dispersal and outfitting.*
- *Three mages and three warriors make the best combination of champions to defeat the evil titans.*
- *Once you become High Ruler of Eire, the final battle may come in two stages against a like number of opponents. If that is the case, ensure sufficient Rest before each of the battles.*
- *Distribute permanent Stone Runes to mages, so that the mages are guaranteed the ability to cast Healing and the best combat spells repetitively without fear of rune breakage. Consider assigning four runes to each of the three mages intended to wage the ultimate wars.*
- *Take only those champions whose maximum Level matches your ruler's.*
- *Make sure your party includes two warriors, one of whom is nicknamed for a canine. Only they can wield a special weapon that assures victory in the final battle.*
- *Revenge is best served frosty!*

The High Ruler Ceremony and Selection of The Six

When your ruler–let's use Lugh–completes the unification of Eire, the entire island gathers to honor and acclaim the new leader. The ceremony takes place beneath the Grand Oak of Eire at a location known only to natives of the island. Even the Fomors cannot disrupt this holiest and most impressive of all ceremonies.

Within minutes of the ceremony's majestic conclusion, word comes of Balor's outright trashing of Omagh. The once beautifully-landscaped province is now nothing but a flat plane of rocks.

This proves the "last straw." The indignity of this ghastly act totally erases any bad feelings any rival rulers in Eire may have had toward the High Ruler. Even those conquered and savaged now forgive and forget. Those connived and hoodwinked follow suit. Balor's many crimes will no longer be tolerated. All the great champions from the remaining provinces flock to the High Ruler's side. Fealty is pledged without reservation. The High Ruler, after recovering from the profound emotions brought on by this inspiring show of unity, takes control.

Lugh may choose any six champions, rulers or not, to finish off Balor once and for all. Known in Celt myth as *The 6*, distinguished from the *Magnificent 7*, the High Ruler receives all of the champions. He barely has time to adjust the crown on his head. The Lia Fail, though, the High Ruler's symbol, brings great comfort, boosting every attribute in the High Ruler's body from the second it was put on.

The selection process is a difficult one. Use this time to take maximum advantage of the game's sort feature. When you wish to find just the right magician, sort by Charm or Mind; to locate warriors, sort by Arms. Dexterity is important for all champions who will take on the final battles. It's probably a waste of time to sort by Ability, Level, or Experience. After all these years, nearly every important champion in the game has reached the maximum in these categories. Perhaps, select the other six of the *Magnificent 7*. On the other hand, some of the now-loyal champions, like Conchobar and Sinnan Og, represent the highest level of might and magic in all of Eire.

The game can be won with a variety of parties. Here's my suggestion, a balanced party. Given the Fomors lemming-like rush to attack the ruler, mages frequently are allowed to park themselves at the far reaches of the battlefield out of harm's way. From there, they work their magic without worry of personal, physical attack. Like all things in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*, there are times when this fine plan doesn't work. Fomors have a tendency to be unpredictable. During one battle, three Fomors spent six turns in rainy, foggy weather attacking a bard. Maybe they were infuriated by the bard's continual casting of Lightning spells for a hundred turns running.

If the High Ruler selects less than six champions for the final battle, expect to lose quickly to Conann. You'll be exiled in disgrace from Eire before ever getting the chance to make Balor's acquaintance!

Table 10-2 shows the six champions that Lugh selected. This party went on to defeat Conann, rather easily, and then Balor, but only after a titanic struggle.

TABLE 10-2 The High Ruler and *The 6*

Champion	Item	Stone Runes
	High Ruler[1]	
Lugh	Lia Fail	–
	Warriors	
Cuchulainn	Sword	–
Lludd	Sword	–
Nuada	Sword	–
	Magicians	
Menw	–	4
Calatin	–	4
Diancecht	–	4

LEGEND

1 Just because I won my first game with Lugh.

Fomor Scouting Report

Until now, all you've seen of the Fomors has been their backs as they fled your province with recently-pillaged cattle, wood, and metal. Fortunately, you always had time to hide the babies. Fomors eat babies!

You can't go into battle with Conann, Balor, and the Fomors without complete details on their strengths and weaknesses. Actually, they all have considerable strengths and practically no weaknesses.

Fomors do act strangely in battle, particularly when the High Ruler's party begins to make some progress. When a Fomor has been captured, the others tend to become dejected and move away from the action to sulk for a while.

Most peculiar is their behavior when they are only a few blows from finishing off a rival champion. At this point, Fomors sometimes stop the attack. For endless turns, they do nothing but taunt or challenge the weakened champion to hand-to-hand combat. Exactly why they do this is unknown. Any champion of merit will always ignore a taunt and reject challenges. All the Fomors accomplish with this cat-and-mouse game is letting the weakened champion regain the strength necessary to fight back.

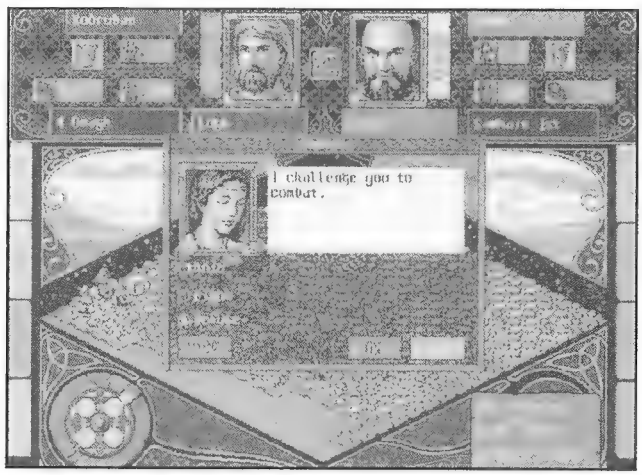


Figure 10-5.
Fomor taunts often afford the High Ruler time to rest.

Tables 10-3 and 10-4 show what's behind those miserable faces and grotesque bodies that have been terrorizing every tribe in Eire for as many years as it took you to become High Ruler. The tables are sorted first by Level, then Strength, and finally, by Arms. No question, the Fomors unanimously qualify as all-Eire villains.

TABLE 10-3 Conann and the Fomors at the Battle of Omagh[1]

Name	Level	Mana	Strength	Charm	Dexterity	Mind	Arms	Skill[2]
Conann	**15**	**229**	**243**	**71**	**75**	**77**	**99**	**–**
Tethra	14	217	235	69	73	70	97	–
Elathan	14	220	234	80	87	88	86	–
Indech	14	204	232	70	72	83	86	Heroism
Cethlan	14	228	231	65	57	80	83	–
Octriallach	13	205	222	56	70	63	84	–
Ethniu	12	213	217	60	61	68	47	–

LEGEND

1 All Fomors are champion warriors, with Ability of 100.
2 Inborn skills only.

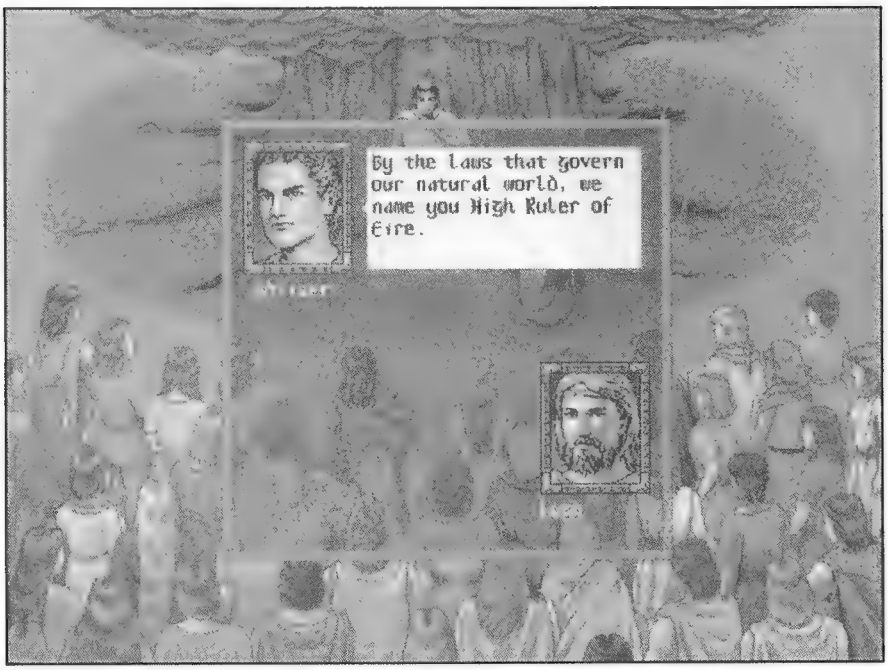


Figure 10-6.
It was fun while it lasted! Now, Lugh is in the soup!

TABLE 10-4 Balor and the Fomors at the Battle of Tory Island[1]

Name	Level	Mana	Strength	Charm	Dexterity	Mind	Arms	Skill[2]
Balor	**16**	**241**	**250**	**150**	**65**	**100**	**100**	*
Domnu	15	227	241	78	70	65	97	–
Morc	15	228	234	72	77	72	98	–
Bress	14	218	233	93	85	90	95	–
Clach	14	219	232	80	72	76	92	–
Eochaid	13	206	224	54	79	26	81	–
Ruadan	13	209	221	78	70	50	79	Might

LEGEND

1 All Fomors are champion warriors, with Ability of 100.
2 Inborn skills only.
* Balor's Evil Eye!

Looking for weaknesses in this bunch is like trying to find a needle in a haystack.

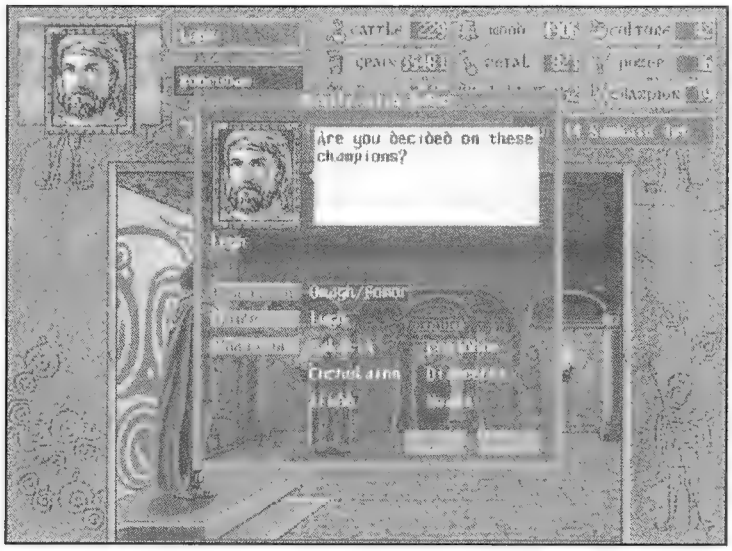


Figure 10-7.
Lugh makes the tough choices. *The 6* is formed.

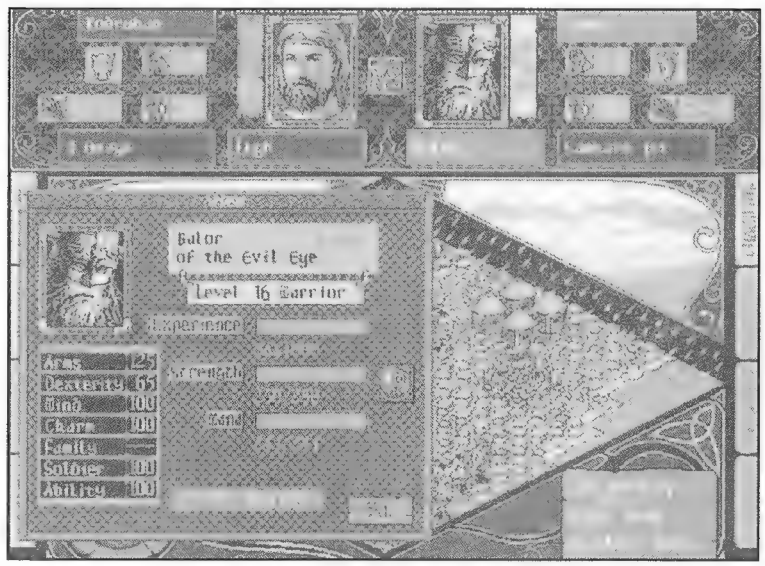


Figure 10-8.
The object of all the excitement.

Figure 10-9.
The warning signs were all there. Did you heed them?

Conann and the Gae Bolga–Battle of Omagh

Conann is one smart Fomor. He sits back at the opposite end of the province. His six champions close in on Lugh. They pass by others in *The 6* as if they didn't exist.

Scan the Omagh battlefield. Terrain isn't much of a factor. Balor and his Fomor friends saw to that by thoroughly destroying the province. No large rock piles are left to give your champions a tactical advantage. Worse yet, the weather in this battle is almost always crystal clear. So much for using the clever weather strategies that proved so beneficial over the course of the game.

When the View command becomes available and from the Scouting Report generated previously (above), notice that no Fomor, not Conann nor any of his six cohorts, has magic capabilities. Chalk one up for the righteous. This high is sustained for not much more than 15 seconds. The elevated confidence your ruler experiences from the Fomors' lack of magic goes spiraling downward when the Fomors are more closely scrutinized.

Almost all of the Fomors are extremely quick, well-armed, strong, and mean as can be. When the Fomors start to maneuver on the battlefield, their attack pattern becomes obvious. These brutes go for the jugular with a vengeance, specifically, they go for the High Ruler. If your ruler has equipped an item that significantly raises Dexterity, there is hope. If not, this could be one tough conflict.

Use the Eire equivalent of the famous Four Corners defensive formation. When the battle begins, send the mages to the far-flung corners of the field of battle. Unless you mistakenly plot a course for a mage that intercepts a Fomor, there should be no interference from the enemy. They are too busy heading straight for the High Ruler.

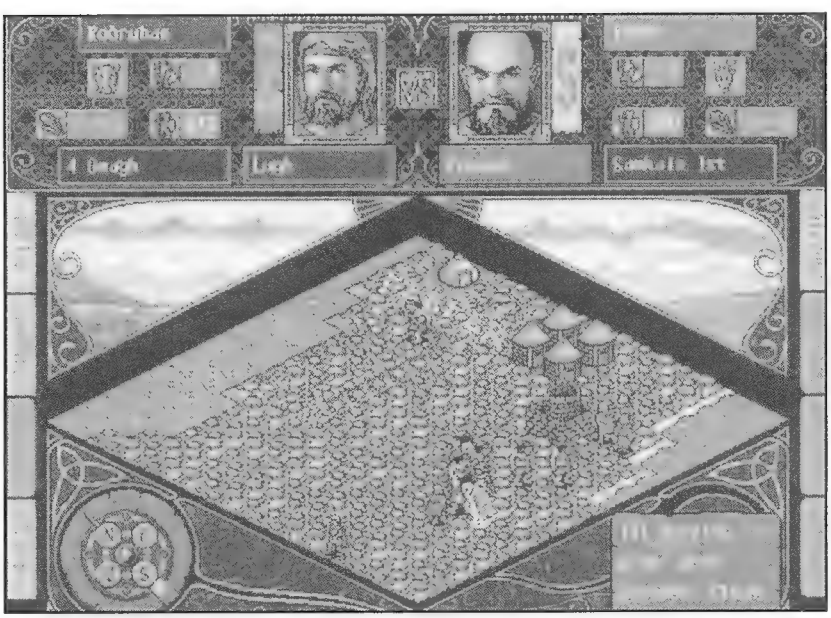


Figure 10-10.
The mages hurry, unmolested by Fomors, away from the infighting.

In clear weather, Fomors can take about five strides. When any Fomor appears to be within a turn of reaching the High Ruler, have Lugh hightail it in a circular pattern around the inner border of the battlefield. While the lemming-like Fomors give chase, the mages should begin targeting the Fomors with their most devastating offensive spells–Lightning, Hurl Stones, and Fireball. Lightning seems to be the best spell to use against them. Inexplicably but almost without fail, the Fomors pay no heed to the mages and continue to close on the High Ruler.

After a while, when about half of the Fomors have fallen, send the two fighters, who have not been doing much of anything, after Conann. The High Ruler needs that powerful Gae Bolga, or the next fight against the worst of them all, Balor, will probably end up a disgraceful defeat and exile from Eire.

By now, the Fomors' wild goose chase after your High Ruler has become more amusing than dangerous. Enjoy the levity while you can. Conann should be just about done. As the High Ruler, administer the felling blow to Conann. It feels good, doesn't it?

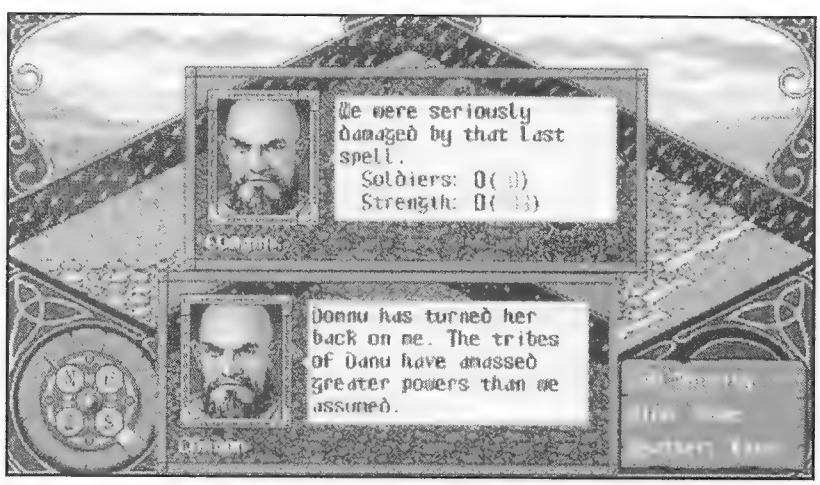


Figure 10-11.
Conann falls to Lugh and *The 6*.

What? Conann doesn't have the Gae Bolga? Your worst fears!

Guess who magically appears on the battlefield? When Conann went down, you sensed elation in the Fomors remaining on the battlefield. Now, scanning the horizon to the west, the High Ruler knows why.

Seeing Balor up close and personal for the first time is truly frightening. He informs the High Ruler in no uncertain terms that this scandalous treatment of Conann, a King of Fomors, will not go unpunished.

Balor's 125 Arms score is to be admired. The Gae Bolga is nowhere to be found.

Only one chink remains in this seemingly impregnable creature: His Dexterity is only 65. All of *The 6* possess higher Dexterity, particularly the mages. Your ruler was wise to select only champions with impressive Dexterity.

How in the world are you going to defend against Balor's close-in onslaught?

Remember when your ruler was pleased that the Fomors could not cast magic? The High Ruler doesn't know this yet, but Balor retains a weapon not readily apparent. Sure, the ruler assumes the chief villain hits hard for maximum damage, but Balor is

not a druid or bard, so there's no magic to be feared. Not!! The Evil Eye is the most damaging weapon and spell in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*. Why should that surprise the ruler? Did you think the manual's interesting, even amusing, anecdote about how Balor got that hideous eye and stare was just background?

It doesn't take long for all of this to become painfully obvious to the party. Balor starts pushing his weight around by flinging the Evil Eye at anyone in the vicinity. While this reduces his Mana, just as if a spell had been cast, the rate is simply not fast enough for the party. The Evil Eye reduces the Strength and Soldiers of the target by about 50 percent every time it is used.

A few turns of this are extremely discouraging to the High Ruler's band. The High Ruler is probably being pelted by the Evil Eye turn after turn. Each assault by the Evil Eye saps Strength to the point that all that can be done is Rest. None of the druids can attack Balor, because they are too busy casting the Heal spell on the High Ruler. The other party members try to gang up on Balor. Unfortunately, he heals quickly.

Then, a shocking surprise! Balor, apparently utterly worn out from hurtling the Evil Eye time and time again across the battle map, suddenly retreats. The ruler surmises that every champion needs a good Rest now and then. In truth, when Balor's 250 strength is reduced by two-thirds, he automatically takes a powder.

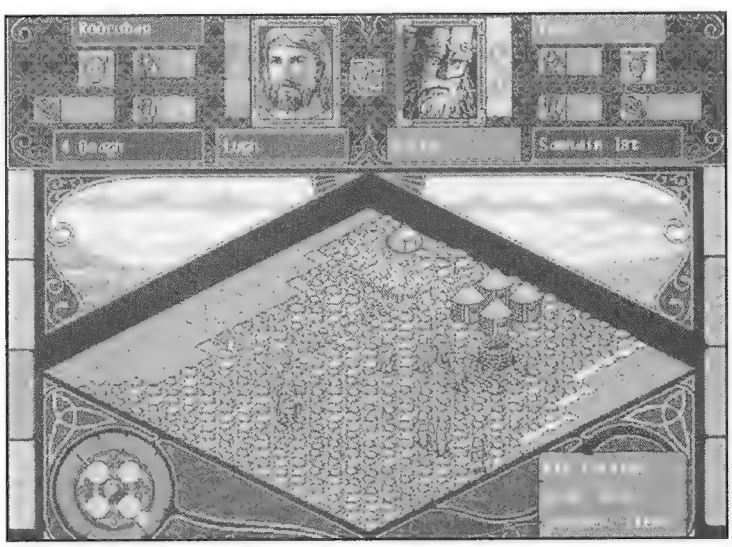


Figure 10-12.
Balor takes a powder!

Astonished, the High Ruler watches as the fleeing villain drops the Gae Bolga. Without hesitation, the ruler retrieves the fabled spear.

The Fomors captured in the battle spit and curse at their Eire captors. The only course of action the High Ruler can take is to exile every last one of them. As each is forever banished from Eire, they show no remorse for their misdeeds. The High Ruler stifles a wry smile.

By the way, forget using that captured Fomor Skull Splitter. It's much too heavy for any of Eire's champions to handle.

All of the champions breathe a sign of relief.

R&R

Save the game now! Repeat: Save the game now!

The High Ruler determines that the only true course of action is to assail Balor in his Tory Island lair. The leader reviews the Fomor scouting report with *The 6*. Conann was one thing, but Balor of the Evil Eye is quite another.

Everyone grudgingly marvels at the Evil Eye's tremendous infliction of damage. They discuss various strategies to counteract, but none seem feasible. The party decides that, armed with the Gae Bolga and the Lia Fail, they will simply use the skills that got them to this point, Balor or no Balor. The High Ruler voices his concern that no one has ever seen Tory Island. In any event, the High Ruler decides that the same wild goose-chase tactics used against Conann will be tried against Balor.

Before resting, the ruler should give the Lia Fail to another champion. Either Skatha or Cuchulainn, if they are part of *The 6*, should get the Gae Bolga, for only they know the special technique to launch the marvelous weapon using a foot.

The High Ruler decides a "Win One for the Gipper" speech would be considered lame by these legends. Everyone collapses in a disheveled heap. Sleep is difficult, but it comes. Rest is needed and quickly. The final battle with Balor is but a short month away. No one thinks the rematch with Balor will be a walk in the park.

NOTE: Accuracy compels me to mention that the Gae Bolga need not be wielded at the final battle with Balor. It will make that battle easier, particularly if Cuchulainn, Skatha, or both are part of *The 6*. Either way, let's get back to sleep.

Balor of the Evil Eye–Battle of Tory Island

Balor seems to be as hale and hearty as ever. (The High Ruler swore afterward that the heinous villain winked at the party just before attacking.) The High Ruler surveys Tory Island, a small and compact island. Much sloping terrain is sure to hinder movement. Pray for bad weather! The tactics used against Conann might not work here.

Balor parks himself at a very strategic spot. Only a single champion can confront him directly from the south. Just to his north, two Fomors provide rear guard. The two depressions you see in the landscape are actually impassable marshes, preventing access to Balor from any other direction. Magic is in order. The spell casters will have to carry the load.

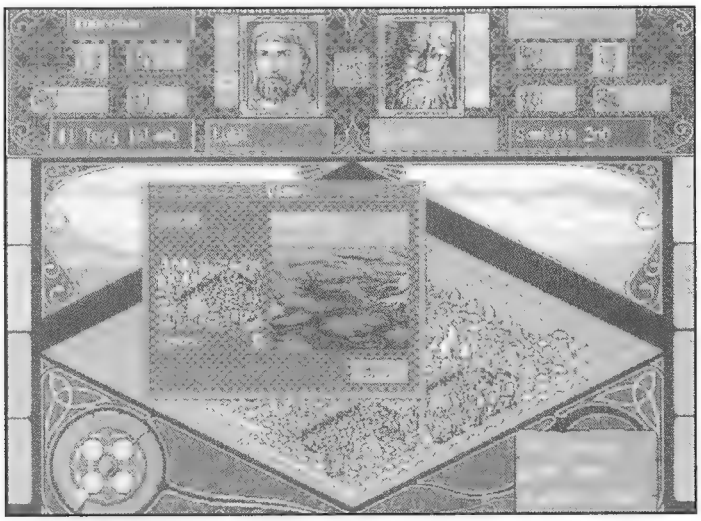


Figure 10-13.
Balor takes up position, from which he does not move for the entire final battle.

The Evil Eye proves devastating, once again. Damage inflicted is four times that of any druid or bard offensive spell. If the High Ruler takes a few good whacks from Balor's buddies, the Evil Eye isn't far behind. Before long, it's instant demotion from High Ruler to ignoble exile.

A little luck always helps. This time, before the battle, make a couple of your escorting champions equally as quick by wearing items that enhance Dexterity.

Also, the High Ruler should be accompanied by two escorts when running the Fomors around in circles. With two quick champions alongside, start the game of tag with the Fomors. For reasons unknown, Balor's Evil Eye is dispatched toward the High Ruler's guardians when this ploy is used. Not that Balor ignores the High Ruler, but, at least, not every Evil Eye barrage is aimed at the ruler.

Try to wipe out as many Fomors as possible, particularly the two guarding Balor's northern rear. Keep the mages pounding away at Balor and those two Fomors. The main villain could care less. He continues by rote to cast the hideous Eye at the circling High Ruler and *The 6*. Massive Healing is always required for any victim of the Evil Eye.

When Balor's Mana starts to wane critically, and the mages have reduced his 250 Strength points to around 150, start heading the Ruler around the marsh directly northwest of Balor. As the High Ruler begins to progress, the two rear Fomor guards strike out to prevent the High Ruler from sneaking up on Balor.

Have the mages weaken these two guards even more. The High Ruler should be able to easily finish them off, for a clear path to Balor. Keep the mages back to Rest them and restore their Mana, while the others continue the attack.

Soon, the High Ruler reaches Balor from the north. During the long trek, the mages should have restored the High Ruler's dead soldiers with the Raise Army spell. With a strong warrior to Balor's south, Balor's Strength reaches critical mass, about 60. Balor is tough, and he uses the enforced rest periods well. But, as your mages wear him down, his recovery no longer reaches the 250 Strength maximum, lowering with each rest period.

Rotate the warrior champion directly confronting Balor from the south. Rest those not directly in the line of fire to relieve the ones that are. If the High Ruler runs low on Strength, back off a few paces. Balor never, ever moves off that spot. When rested, the High Ruler should move back in.

Even all of the mages, with their rune tablets down to a few runes and unable to cast any spells, helped out. They took turns aiding in the rotation of those directly confronting Balor from the south. Balor is unable to withstand this withering attack.

Congratulations! And enjoy the game's beautiful, moving ending. I wish I could be there to see you win the day!

Chapter Eleven

Tutorial—Lugh's Odyssey

This tutorial is designed to give the beginning player a quick, easy orientation into playing *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*. Although KOEI thoughtfully included a demonstration game selectable from the Startup options screen, the demo might move somewhat fast for the complete beginner. I recommend watching the demo once you've gained a basic familiarity with the game's mechanics, plot, and goals.

This chapter is not intended as a tedious exposition of the game's mechanics and features. Rather, the tutorial provides a sequential narrative that spans the first several years of an actual game, featuring Lugh, as the chosen ruler. After that point, this primer leaps forward through the decade to catch up with Lugh at the pinnacle of his success, the High Ruler ceremony.

I will not spoil the ending for you by showing screens of the impressive KOEI graphic sequences as the end game unfolds, but I will show you Lugh's Status screens as he moves up the

unification ladder and eventually attains the status of High Ruler. This gives you some concrete goals to achieve and with which to compare.

Are you a veteran player who is having trouble advancing the Ruler fast enough in economic, diplomatic, and combat tactics? Scan the tutorial for tips and strategies on building a stable foundation from which to springboard rapidly up the game's progress power structure.

For maximum results, start a new game and follow along with this practical instruction guide. That way, you actually play the game, while at the same time, increase your familiarity with the game controls.

Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye is a dynamic fantasy/strategy game. Accordingly, the numbers given in the ruler, province, and champion status reports appearing throughout Chapter 11 definitely vary. The variances might be significant when compared to the numbers you may get when you actually sit down to play a real game when finished with the tutorial. Therefore, consider these numbers a rough equivalent to hard and fast game statistics.

A final note before we begin the tutorial. Another way to use the tutorial is to simply read it carefully, without simultaneously playing the game. This gives the new player a broad overview of what can be expected in the way of interactive game events, as well as with regard to the specifics of game control and mechanics. After reading the tutorial, you can then jump right in and play a new game of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* based on the concepts learned, referring back to the tutorial, as needed.

Year 1

Samhain 1st (Turn 1)

So, you believe my selecting Lugh was a bad choice of rulers to grace the tutorial. Yes, I know Lugh came in nearly dead last in the analysis of which ruler was the strongest to select for starting your first game. Snap out of it! Lugh, despite his low ranking and initial shortcomings in champions and provinces, eventually became High Ruler, defeated Conann, then dispatched Balor to the great beyond.

What a way to start a game! A foul-smelling, hideous Balor minion, no less than the evil one's dreaded second-in-command, Conann, demands tribute. Given Lugh's low Experience and Strength level now, you might as well pay up. Take the seizure of 521 Grain and 13 Cattle in stride. This outrageous and annoying event is repeated at the beginning of every year!

Lugh begins the game with two escorting champions–two level-three bards, Setven and Ferghus. The latter has an Inborn skill, Politics, which will come in very handy when Lugh wants a champion to approach another tribe diplomatically.

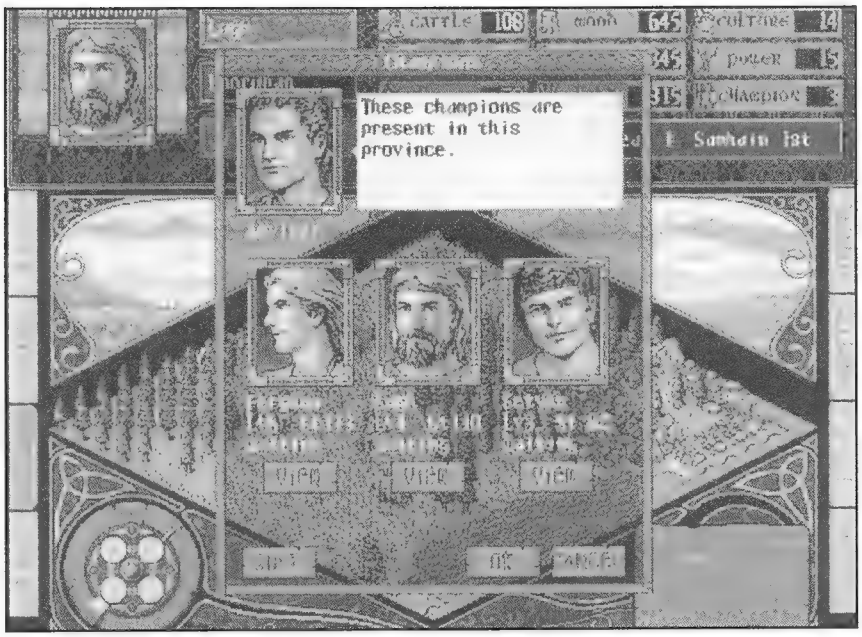


Figure 11-1.
In Tara, Lugh, Ferghus, and Setven prepare to begin the unification of Eire.

The Champion Tent's front flap is open. Gwnyver, a fleet, well-armed warrior, visits the province. Lugh's high Charm assures that wandering champions like Gwnyver will pass through the province each month. She tells of a tribe in a far-off place called Sligo, which Gwnyver thinks is Eire's strongest tribe at the moment. Lugh, hiding his disappointment, takes a chance and successfully recruits her. Your champion total increases by 25 percent!

TABLE 11-1 Tara at Turn 1

Prestige	96	Provinces	1
Cattle	108	Folk	1809
Grain	4689	Culture	14
Farm	78	Power	15
Wood	645	Champion	3
Metal	345		

Before assigning tasks to Setven and Ferghus (Gwnyver, like all recruited champions, must rest for a month), let's take stock of Tara, the only province of Lugh's tribe, the Rodruban. There's plenty of Grain, a healthy number of people, and enough Wood and Metal to build up the Burg, the Citadel, or even to make some Items. Culture and Power need to be improved, but all-in-all, for a one-province tribe, the situation isn't depressing.

CHAMPION STATUS:

Lugh begins at level four with the Inborn skill Form, useful for creating the Burg. His Ability is 50, the starting point for all champions in the game. He has decent across-the-board ratings in Arms, Dexterity, Mind, and Charm (93, 79, 72, and 94, respectively). With 198 Soldiers and 185 Family, he is well-protected and comforted. A Strength of 110 seems fine, and he needs about 110 Experience points to elevate to the next level.

Ferghus is a level-three bard. He starts with an adequate Mind (67) and lots of Charm (84). His Dexterity is low (24), but the 61 Arms score will help him wield a weapon if he can't cast spells during a combat. His Experience level, at six, is higher than most beginning characters. This will serve him well when he tries to cast spells in combat or on the home province.

Setven, a level-three bard, has all-around commendable attributes, especially in Dexterity (54, 82, 58, 69). Dexterity helps a champion in many ways, including the ability to dodge magic cast at them. He is nearing a new Experience level. A few simple tasks, and he'll become a level-four bard!

Gwnyver, though only a level-three warrior, is a great catch. She holds an 81 Arms and an 83 Dexterity. She'll be able to hit often and hard. Her acceptable Charm of 68 may help when she tries to Taunt enemy champions in combat.

No man (or woman) is an island. Exploration of other provinces is the only way to begin your quest to become High Ruler and to defeat Balor. Looking at the champions, Lugh naturally picks Ferghus, whose inborn Politics skill greatly enhance dealings with other tribes. Lugh sends Ferghus north and Setven south.

Samhain 2nd (Turn 2)

Lugh laments that he gave himself nothing to do last month. He could have been herding cattle, building up the Citadel or the Burg, mining for ore, or farming to bolster the province's very low Farmland rating.

With Ferghus and Setven away, Lugh cannot check on how they are doing. Not to worry, for explorers always return! Gwnyver is now rested enough to start working. She's at about half-Strength, but no rivals appear to be threatening invasion at the moment. Lugh sends her to build up the Burg to improve Tara's Culture. He heads for the Citadel with Wood and Metal in hand, ready to build up this important structure.

PROVINCE STATUS:

Because Lugh failed to do any work, Gwnyver was resting, and the others were out exploring, about the only thing that happened to the province was the addition of 20 new Folk. Population always rises from month to month.

Samhain 3rd (Turn 3)

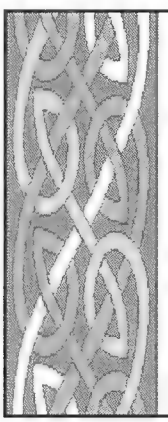


TABLE 11-2 Tara at Turn 3

Prestige	95	Provinces	1
Cattle	108	Folk	1838
Grain	4689	Culture	16
Farm	73	Power	19
Wood	525	Champion	4
Metal	205		

Now, things are beginning to heat up! Ferghus returns with the news that the Tir Tairn tribe occupies the province to the north. Lugh has heard of this fairly belligerent tribe from visiting champions. Setven's news of an empty province to the south causes great rejoicing. Lugh eagerly proceeds to the Tribal Counsel to look at the provinces discovered by Ferghus and Setven.

CHAMPION STATUS:

- *Ferghus adds 40 Experience for the exploration, loses 10 Strength.*
- *Setven rises at the same rate as Ferghus.*
- *Lugh and Gwnyver raise the Culture and Power of Tara by two each.*
- *Lugh's Prestige lowers slightly.*

PROVINCE STATUS:

- *Metals and Wood diminish because of the building that went on last month.*
- *Farmland continues to deteriorate.*

Ferghus needs to comfort Lugh. The ruler has always bemoaned the fact that champions' permanent attributes can only be raised by Items created in the Burg or found on journeys.

Lugh decides to enter the Citadel to take advantage of Ferghus' inborn Politics skill. He sends the bard with Tribute (200 Wood) to the northern province to appease the Tir Tairn by establishing Peace. Like Exploration, a Tribute journey takes two months, one out and one in. Realizing most provinces are full up on Grain but low on Wood, Metal, and Cattle, he instructs Ferghus to take Wood for Tribute–anything but Grain.

Born with the Form skill, Lugh enters the Burg to create a battle axe, which will take two months and some Wood and Metal. Gwnyver will also create an axe, but her lower Dexterity and lack of the inborn Form skill will double the materials she needs to make it. Setven is given the task of mining metal.

Figure 11-2.
Lugh enjoys visiting the Tribal Council after conquering more provinces!

Samhain 4th (Turn 4)

CHAMPION STATUS:

- *Ferghus is away trying to pacify the Tir Tairn.*
- *Lugh and Gwnyver are still in the Burg, as they will be for another month or two.*
- *Setven has gained some Experience and lost some Strength.*

PROVINCE STATUS:

- *Farmland continues to decrease, Folk rises, Culture and Power stay the same.*
- *Metal rises from Setven's efforts.*
- *Wood goes down from the busy item creation efforts of Lugh and Gwnyver in the Burg.*

Lugh and Gwnyver only appear as the two heroes in the Burg when the mouse is scanned atop the Burg's icon. Even though Lugh is working, he still runs the show. Setven is set on herding some cattle. Cattle are very important in Eire, and their numbers should never become too low.

Tir Tairn now is at Peace (level 24) with Lugh's tribe, thanks to Ferghus' successful Tribute mission. Ferghus praised his lucky stars that Curoi, the ruthless leader of that tribe, didn't throw him in jail or worse. Lugh reminds Ferghus that rulers may not always be cooperative with foreign visitors, but no champion has ever failed to return from such a mission, and no ruler has ever turned down freebies. Now that Tribute is out of the way, caravans bent on trading can begin traveling between Tara and the Tir Tairn provinces to further raise the Peace.

Imbolc 1st (Turn 5)

CHAMPION STATUS:

- *Ferghus' diplomatic accomplishment slightly raises Lugh's Prestige.*
- *Setven nears a new Experience level.*

PROVINCE STATUS:

- *Cattle and Folk have risen.*
- *Peace has been obtained with one tribe.*

Now, save your game, if you have not already done so. *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* should be saved early and often.

Lugh finishes the battle axe, a powerful weapon for future clashes. All created Items are automatically sent to the province's Treasury, located in the Citadel. The ruler eagerly rushes to arm his new toy. When equipped, the battle axe boosts Lugh's Arms attribute by 10 to 103 points. Bring on the rival tribes!

Lugh has learned some valuable lessons in the first few months of this game of *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*. Most domestic actions taken by champions cause a relatively small seven to 10 point Strength reduction and improve Experience by 20 to 25. At some juncture, with all this strenuous activity, the game forces champions to Rest. Lugh's Prestige does not rise until he starts to do something a little more drastic. Until then, Lugh's Prestige, which has hovered around its beginning mark of 95, rather low for a legend, will make no upward progress.

One guaranteed method of increasing Prestige is for the tribe to annex provinces. Remember Kilcullen, that well-stocked, unpopulated land Setven discovered to the south? Though spreading his champions thin, Lugh decides to begin raising his Prestige. He prepares to journey to Kilcullen. To keep Tara protected, Lugh takes only Ferghus along to settle the new province, which requires only a simple move through the Burg. Setven and Gwnyver remain in Tara to protect the home fires.

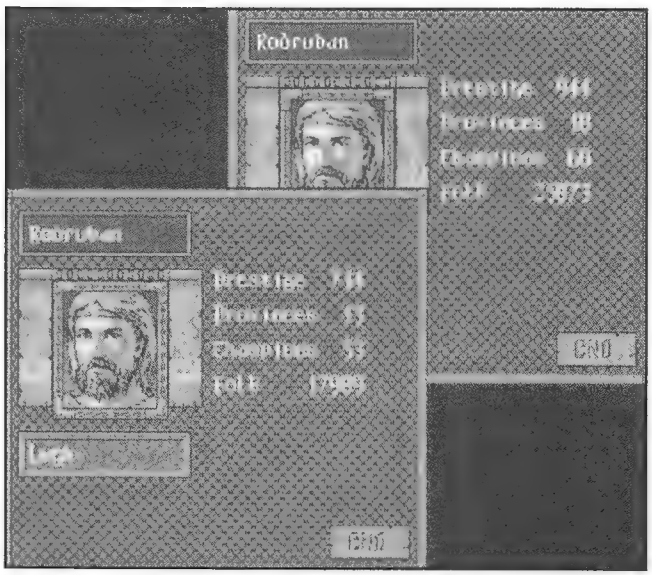


Figure 11-3.
After several years of productive strategy, Lugh makes great progress.

Lugh reconsiders. New colonies bring added exposure to the tribe's borders. Instead, the ruler believes they should check out that province to the west that no champion of Lugh's has explored. He sends Ferghus. Lugh endeavors to continue improving Tara's Culture by constructing improvements to the Burg, while Setven does the same with the Citadel.

Imbolc 2nd (Turn 6)

CHAMPION STATUS:

- *Congratulations to Setven! His work on the Citadel earned enough Experience points to raise him to level five.*
- *Gwnyver finished her battle axe and is approaching a level rise in Experience from her efforts.*

PROVINCE STATUS:

- *Culture and Power have risen to 20 and 21, respectively.*
- *Farmland is still decreasing.*
- *Wood and Metal are now under 200 due to all this building of items and structures.*

A high-level Druid visits the Champion Tent. Because it's almost impossible to recruit champions at levels higher than Lugh's, who is still at level four, why not start learning some spells? Got cattle? It costs 15 of the precious beasts to learn just one spell. Because magic is so important, constant vigilance in tending to the beasts is necessary. So, start herding your cattle.

Luckily, the province has enough of these bovine creatures to buy a few spellcasting lessons. When the ruler or province chief learns spells from a visiting champion, all magicians in the tribe subsequently learn these same spells (automatically).

The tribe learns the druid spell of Part Water. For another 15 head, the druid spell of Confusion is learned. They exchange more cattle to learn the Glamour spell. Lugh had better jot down the Rune and Element combinations of each of the new spells.

Checking with the druid for information on other tribes, Deirdre volunteers that the Sligo tribe is the most powerful in Eire. Lugh can't help but feel pangs of envy.

Lugh now recognizes the importance of Charm in dealing triumphantly with other Eire tribes. Gwnyver is not only a strong and speedy warrior, she also possesses lofty Charm. Tir Tairn is still at Peace (24) with the tribe, so Gwnyver takes a caravan loaded with precious units of Metal and heads north.

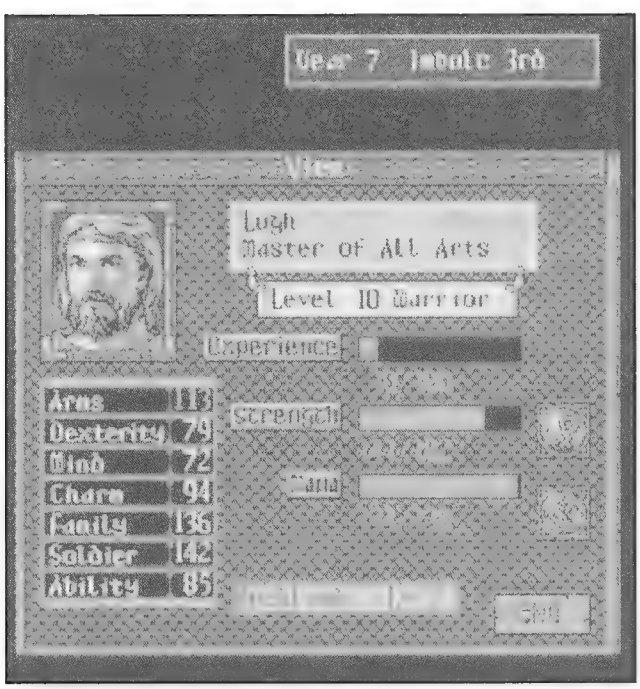


Figure 11-4.
Lugh reaches level 10!

Setven is left completely alone. Lugh heads for Kilcullen, while Ferghus journeys to the new unsettled province. When Gwnyver leaves, too, waving good-bye, Setven starts to feel rather anxious. To give him an advantage in the event the province is attacked while everyone traipses around the Eire countryside, Gwnyver gave Setven the battle axe she made. This raises Setven's Arms level by 10. Gwnyver really didn't need the axe at this time. Trade caravans never have to fight and always return to the province from which they came.

Ferghus returns from exploring to the west. He's discovered another empty province just waiting for the tribe to settle without a fight. This is a stroke of luck, providing Tara with another escape route if invaded by an overwhelming force.

Imbolc 3rd (Turn 7)

CHAMPION DATA:

- *Lugh's Prestige continues to fall at a slight rate.*
- *Ferghus' Explorations have sent his Experience soaring close to the attainment of the next level.*

PROVINCE DATA (TARA):

- *Wood and Metal are now so low that any further attempts to create items or to build up the Burg or the Citadel will not be allowed.*

A level-12 bard visits the tent. For 10 head of cattle, Lugh can learn about the many treasures scattered throughout Eire. He asks about the Seven Pigs treasure. The bard tells him that the tribe owning this treasure will never go hungry again. For some unexplained reason, Lugh's stomach growls.

Setven, with only 44 of a possible 91 Strength points, needs Rest. Ferghus is sent to settle the province to the west, taking with him over 1,000 units of Grain. When he visited the empty province earlier, Ferghus noticed there was a grain shortage. He also verified the shortage before leaving by going to the Tribal Council to check out the maps.

Beltene 1st (Turn 8)

CHAMPION STATUS:

- *Prestige for Lugh is now up to 135. A 40-point Prestige gain is about average for the peaceful or not-so-peaceful addition of a province. One down and 38 to go.*

PROVINCE STATUS (TARA):

- *Folk for the tribe has been raised by several hundred. Such a large jump in population is common when annexing unsettled provinces. The people leap is even higher–at times, in the thousands–when a province is settled.*
- *Wood and Metal are at 61 and 89.*

PROVINCE DATA (KILCULLEN):

- *Very low levels (5) for Culture and Power*

Tara now has a sister province, Kilcullen. Lugh successfully completed the trip's objective.

Gwnyver's Trade mission was worth it. She offered 88 Metal for 200 Wood. In reaching the trade agreement, Peace with Tir Tairn rose to 28. The increase was not substantial for two reasons: Trade is not as enhancing to Peace as Tribute, and the first contact is always more productive than subsequent trade negotiations.

Setven, feeling relieved he's no longer alone in Tara and after resting, is dispatched to mine a large rock pile in the northeast section of Tara.

Three champions romp in the Champion Tent. One champion is willing to teach more druid magic. Lugh learns Lightning, but doesn't have the 30 Cattle necessary to learn the other two spells that can be taught. Lugh is still not Charming or Experienced enough to convince any champions in the tent to join. Recruiting will become easier as Lugh moves upwards through the Experience levels.

Lugh decides to explore to the west, leaving Setven in charge. Ferghus, now in charge of the new province, Taghmon, decides to build up the Citadel, which has an anemic rating of five.

Beltene 2nd (Turn 9)

Thanks to Setven, Tara's Metal stores are up to over 200, but less than 70 Wood remains for the Build and Create commands.

Ferghus has attained a new Level. This proves that war is not necessary to progress in *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye.*

Ferghus cannot recruit Gwydion, a druid, who paid a few visits to Tara over the preceding few months. (I guess all the good food ran out!) The champion learns the Protection spell from Gwydion–there goes another 15 head of cattle! Ferghus takes a well-deserved Rest.

Setven sets Gwnyver to building up Tara's Citadel. Lugh is still away Exploring. Because Tara is low on Metal, Setven heads for the rock piles to Mine.

Beltene 3rd (Turn 10)

With only Setven in Tara, the province starts to go to seed. Even the population begins to dwindle. A single champion both governing and doing the actual labor in a province can cause this situation, sometimes as quickly as within two months.

On the plus side, Ferghus feels downright frisky now, having rested. He is absolutely reveling at his new Level, and itches for more duties that will take advantage of his inborn skill of Politics.

Peace with Tir Tairn holds at around 27. Ferghus chooses to build up his province's Citadel to increase Power, which is at a dangerously low nine rating.

Lugh returns from the west, where he discovers the Bri Leith tribe. Lugh notices that Calatin, the ruler of the Bri Leith, currently has a very low Strength. The same applies to several other champions that reside with Calatin. Even if outnumbered, Lugh could send in a couple of champions to invade, then head straight for the weak leader, finish him off, and easily win the province.

Lugh, unsure of what to do, checks it out with the Tribal Council. He is told to continue strengthening relationships with other tribes. Lugh likes the unfolding Eire map, which now shows his domain has tripled from one province to three. The ruler decides, with his high Charm, to trek over to the Bri Leith with Tribute–100 units of Wood.

Gwnyver keeps building the Citadel, while Setven finishes his rest and heads for that familiar rock pile.

Lughnasad 1st (Turn 11)

Lugh's Prestige is still in the low 130s.

Ferghus has built Taghmon's Citadel to a Power of 11. If he had the masonry skill, he would have required less materials, but he is alone in a strange land and must make

do. He again fails to recruit the recalcitrant Gwydion. Cattle is low, so Ferghus does some herding.

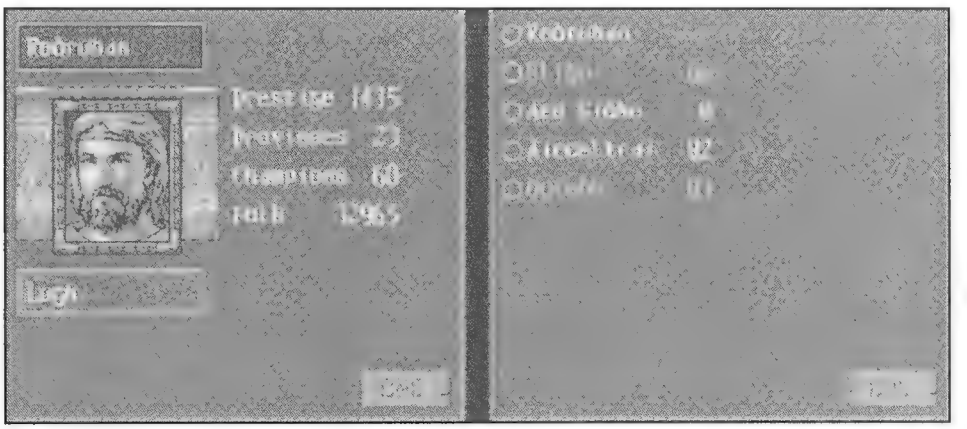


Figure 11-5.
Lugh has won over various secondary tribes. His Prestige is impressive!

Ferghus is approached by the Tir Tairn. The representative from Curoi has 132 Metal units and wants Cattle in Trade. Ferghus concludes the deal, offering about 210 Wood. This raises the Peace between the two tribes to 28.

Setven, exhausted, must again rest. He thinks about trying to recruit some visiting champions, but thinks better of it. If the more charming Lugh or Ferghus can't recruit, Setven doesn't have a prayer. His Charm is fairly low.

Lugh's tribute is graciously accepted by the Bri Leith. Peace between those tribes reaches 23.

Year 2 (Turns 14 to 27)

For the next year or so, Lugh can't seem to do anything right. Every time he tries to expand, the home province he leaves to invade the other province is, in turn, overrun by another tribal ruler. One champion does not make a defense, which Lugh is learning the hard way.

A war of attrition has ensued. Still escorted by the loyal Gwnyver, Setven, and Ferghus, Lugh concentrates on building up the Peace with neighboring tribes. That way, no incursions are likely to strip Lugh of what little territory he controls. Protecting the new economic powerhouses moves to the top of Lugh's "to do" list.

Lugh is often seen meditating for days. Ferghus tells Setven and Gwnyver that the ruler is champing at the bit to begin the long road toward unifying Eire. Actually, Lugh's meditations consist of wondering how that lofty goal can be obtained, when he can't even add a handful of provinces, much less 40. He does not have long to wait . . . .

Year 3

Samhain 2nd (Turn 28)

The very next month, Lugh embarks on a campaign of military province annexation. Lugh takes this trip with regret, but the unification goal easily overcame his misgivings, and he spurred the champions and the rest of the tribe to go along.

Once he decided that expansion was the only true course, Lugh easily overran the Fianna province of Moate (19). Oscar, the province chief, was convinced to join the Rodrubans. The only alternatives available to a losing captive–release or exile–did not appeal to this extremely strong warrior.

Imbolc 2nd (Turn 32)

Life is good for Lugh and his champions. Ferghus is now an up-and-coming level-eight bard with a retainer of 140 Family and 149 Soldiers. All of his Trade and Diplomacy efforts have elevated has Ability to 64. There is no sensitive task that Lugh won't assign him. Recently, he learned some fresh bard spells: Fierce Wind, Smoke, and Increase Morale.

Frequently, Ferghus boosts the morale of the provinces by going on a goodwill tour. He shows up the first of every month at a different province (Lugh now has 12) and casts spells to increase the folk birth or cattle, the rank of the Farmland, or to boost the spirits of all within earshot.

Lugh maintains a steady elevation in Experience. He is now driven to become the High Ruler of Eire. Unfortunately, he refrains from diplomatic efforts and concentrates on waging war. His Prestige continues to rise throughout this year. Rival tribe rulers continually try to stop Lugh's militarist efforts with Tribute and Trade. These efforts are to no avail. Lugh has become so driven, he often declines out-and-out gifts.

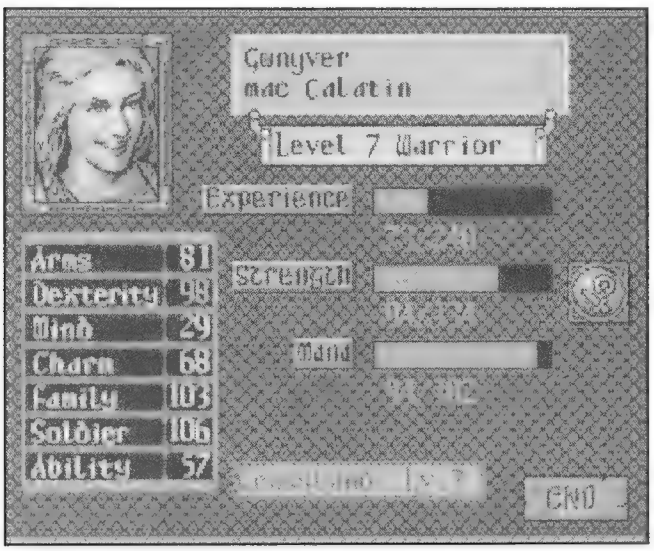


Figure 11-6.
Gwnyver reaches level 7.

Figure 11-7.
Ferghus reaches level 11.

Year 4

Samhain 1st (Turn 40)

Goll, a recruited wanderer, achieves a dramatic victory over Finn in the battle for Nenagh, a strategic province located in the dead center of Eire. Four new champions join Lugh's fold. A Staff and a Club in the province's Citadel Treasury are distributed to champions without Items. Showing compassion for a conquered province, Goll permits Finnegas, the defeated chief who is now a loyal Rodruban, to take his pick in the Treasury.

Lugh likes checking out the Eire map, gloating over his ever-expanding empire. Ferghus and Setven are still along for the ride, but secretly wish for a less draining road to the top.

Samhain 2nd (Turn 41)

Gwnyver continues to progress in a consistently upward pattern. She now nears level nine, a warrior of status in the tribe. Her entourage has grown appreciably. When champions are recruited, they have no Family, Soldiers, or even an Ability rating. Gwnyver now has 124 retainers and 136 Soldiers. Most important, her overall Ability has grown to 51, a 12-point rise from the game's beginning.

Diarmuid, who joined Lugh at the battle for Tralee, recently acquired special knowledge and enlightenment of the proper method for casting some powerful Combat Offensive spells. Putting the new knowledge to use, she easily overcame Cynfan, province chief of the Cnoc Aine's province of Gort, with a Lightning strike. A single Hurl Stones spell wiped out over a third of Cynfan's Strength.

Lugh has no time to relax. No sooner does he win the battle for Croom, than the hated Cnoc Aine tribe invades. The Cnoc Aine are responding to Diarmuid's incursion and seizure of Gorl. This completely shatters the Peace rating between the two tribes. Even though the intruder is escorted by two champions of her own, Lugh and his cohorts immediately surround Miach, the Cnoc Aine battle chief, and take her down. She succumbs to her wounds, and her champions flee. No more captives are obtained, but Croon is now safely established as part of the Rodruban tribe.

Samhain 3rd (Turn 42)

Lugh's Prestige skyrockets to 461, surpassing that of the few other rulers with whom Lugh maintains some semblance of Peace. Soon, when the Peace between these provinces is raised to about 75, Lugh endeavors to make them his secondary tribes. Shortly thereafter, Lugh convinces the rulers to tie Oaths of Fealty to Lugh and to the Rodruban tribe.

Lugh's Ability (at 71) continues to move upward. His Family and Soldier numbers hover near 240 as he approaches level eight. Almost 8,000 Folk, five provinces, and 12 champions are loyal.

Lugh looks ready to break through and become Eire's dominant ruler.

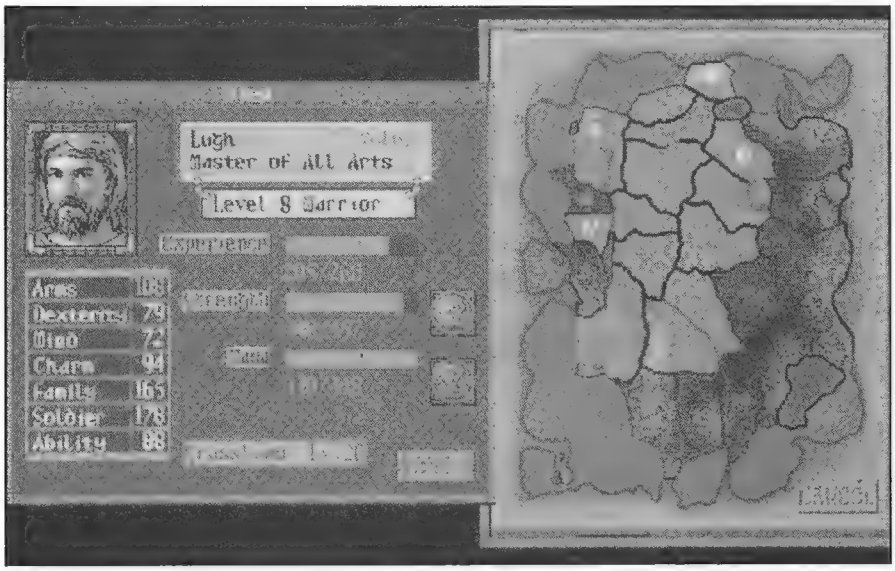


Figure 11-8.
Lugh gobbles up central Eire!

Samhain 4th and Beyond

The next 10 years are filled with happiness and sorrow. Setven is killed in one battle. He wandered too close to a level 15 warrior armed with a bright, shiny new sword. Champions sometimes lose their lives. It is rare, but happens. Lugh is downcast for almost a year.

Ferghus and Gwnyver remain loyal, serving their master in good and bad times. Ferghus becomes Lugh's chief diplomat, and Gwnyver supervises building throughout the tribe's province.

Lugh becomes High Ruler. After several misguided attempts, he defeats Balor. Now retired to his home province of Tara, every year he places flowers on Setven's resting place. Ferghus visits often. But, they are bored.

This ends the tutorial. It was quite a ride, don't you agree? Can you do as well? Can you do better? Only time and lots of game playing can answer that question!

Appendix

Combat Spells Ready Reference Card

APPENDIX TABLE 1 Druid Combat Spells

Spell	Runes	Element
Confusion	4, 4, 1-3	Earth
Extinguish	2, 4, Any	Water
Flood	4, 3, Any	Water
Glamour	3, 4, Any	Water
Heal	3, 1, Any	Water
Hurl Stones	2, 1, Any	Earth
Lightning	2, 2, Any	Water
Orb of Lava	1, 2, Any	Earth
Part Water	1, 3, Any	Earth
Protection	1, 2, Any	Water
Raise Army	4, 4, 4	Earth
Tree Tangle	3, 1, Any	Earth

APPENDIX TABLE 2 Bard Combat Spells

Spell	Runes	Element
Chaos	4, 4, Any	Air
Decrease Morale	3, 3, Any	Fiery
Fierce Wind	4, 1, Any	Air
Fire Trap	2, 2, Any	Fiery
Fireball	1, 2, Any	Fiery
Hypnotize	1, 4, Any	Fiery
Increase Morale	3, 1, Any	Fiery
Internal Fire	3, 4, Any	Fiery
Poison Cloud	2, 2, Any	Air
Smoke	2, 1, Any	Air
Speed	1, 3, Any	Air
Twister	4, 3, Any	Air

New Discoveries Found by_____(Fill in Name)

APPENDIX TABLE 3 New Discoveries[1]

Name	Level[2]	Class[3]	Arms	Dexterity	Mind	Charm	Skill[4]

LEGEND

1 Experience, Strength, and Mana not included. These attributes are consistent across all champions.
2 Experience level as the game opens.
3 B=Bard; D=Druid; W=Warrior.
4 Only Inborn skills listed.

Upper Limits

Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye is chockfull of statistics. From champion Attributes to storehouse grain to Experience, the savvy player must constantly monitor the ups and downs of vital, game-breaking integers. While these numbers differ in importance, the following stats will bring you up-to-speed on certain interesting data.

APPENDIX TABLE 4 Celtic Tales Upper Limits[1]

Categories	High Marks
Grain	65535
Farmland	15582
Cattle	9999
Metal	9999
Wood	9999
Game Turns	910[2]
Mana	255
Strength	255
Champions	158
Constant Attributes	150
Peace	100
Soldiers for Battle	100[3]
Culture	47
Power	47
Experience Level	15[4]
Items a Champion Can Carry	1
Wooden Runes	12
Stone Runes	12
Skills	16
Items	31
Elements	4

LEGEND

1 Absolute maximum values for listed game categories.
2 70 Years x 13 Turn Months per Year.
3 More than 100 soldiers can comprise a champion's coterie in the province.
4 For every champion in the game, but Balor.

Handy-Dandy Champion Locators

APPENDIX TABLE 5 Champion Locator (No Names)

	Province Location																								
	Turn Number																								
Chp	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25

APPENDIX TABLE 6 Champion Locator (Rulers)

	Province Location																								
	Turn Number																								
Chp	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**
A																									
B																									
C																									
D																									
E																									
F																									
G																									
H																									
I																									
J																									
K																									
L																									
M																									
N																									
O																									
P																									
Q																									

LEGEND

A Angus Og
B Calatin
C Conchobar
D Cuchulainn
E Curoi
F Finn
G Finvarra
H Ilbreach
I Lugh
J Manannan
K Medb
L Morrigan
M Nuada
N Senchan
O Sinnan Og
P Skatha
Q Treon

Disaster Recovery–Save Game Strategies

Watchwords for the thoughtful gamer: "Save early and often." Like most games, *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* includes a save game feature. The player is given six save game opportunities or slots. In a typical game, you are likely to perform hundreds of turns, up to a maximum of over 900. Undoubtedly, you will find it advantageous to save the game at dozens of strategically interesting and favorable winning positions. As a result, you may wish for far more save slots than are available.

Using the familiar DOS Copy command or any reliable copy utility, you can extend the number of save game slots infinitely–subject, of course, to disk space limits. This is accomplished by moving or copying any or all save game information and data to another location on your hard disk or to a floppy. That way, you can safely save another six games, writing over the save games already archived. In this way, you can save 12 games. Do this as often as you like. The game conveniently names the games after the active ruler, province, and date, for ready reference.

Here's how it's done. At the DOS prompt type:

CD*Name of Directory Where Game Installed*\XM [ENTER]

This command changes your current hard drive directory and takes you straight to a subdirectory in the *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye* main directory. On my system, I installed the game to a directory named *Celt*, so my command line to enter the subdirectory reads:

C:\CELT\XM

(What's a died-in-the-wool, DOS-challenged gamer doing in this complex techie world of operating systems?)

Observe that the XM subdirectory contains many files with a .DAT extension. You'll immediately notice that many of the file names end in numbers. It's no accident that file names ending in one (1) are the first save game slot, and so on and so forth. While you can painstakingly copy the seven files needed to move the specific save game to be archived, let's make this as painless as possible. Simply copy all 55 .DAT files, totaling about 1.2 MB to another location, as follows:

COPY *.DAT *New Location*

For me, that would be:

COPY *.DAT C:\ARCHIVE

"Archive" is the directory I created to hold these save game files.

If you wish to save the six new save game slots created by your DOS techniques, create another directory. Copying files to a directory with files named the same erases the older files!

There's an even easier way to do this. Enter your word processor or the DOS Editor, and create this little file:

CD*Name of Directory Where Game Installed*\XM

Then:

COPY *.DAT C:*Directory Where You Wish to Archive the Six Save Games*

Save the file to the game's main directory, with a single letter for ease of use. I name mine CT terminating with a BAT extension (*CT.BAT*).

When you wish to retrieve a particular save game from the archives, create another file, calling this *GET.BAT*, as follows:

CD*Name of Directory Where Save Games Archived*\XM

Then:

COPY *.DAT C:*Directory Where Game Installed*

APPENDIX TABLE 7 Save Game One Files

KPMOVDT1.DAT
KPETCDT1.DAT
KPWORLD1.DAT
KPHEROS1.DAT
KPTRIBE1.DAT
KPLPORD1.DAT
KEEP.DAT

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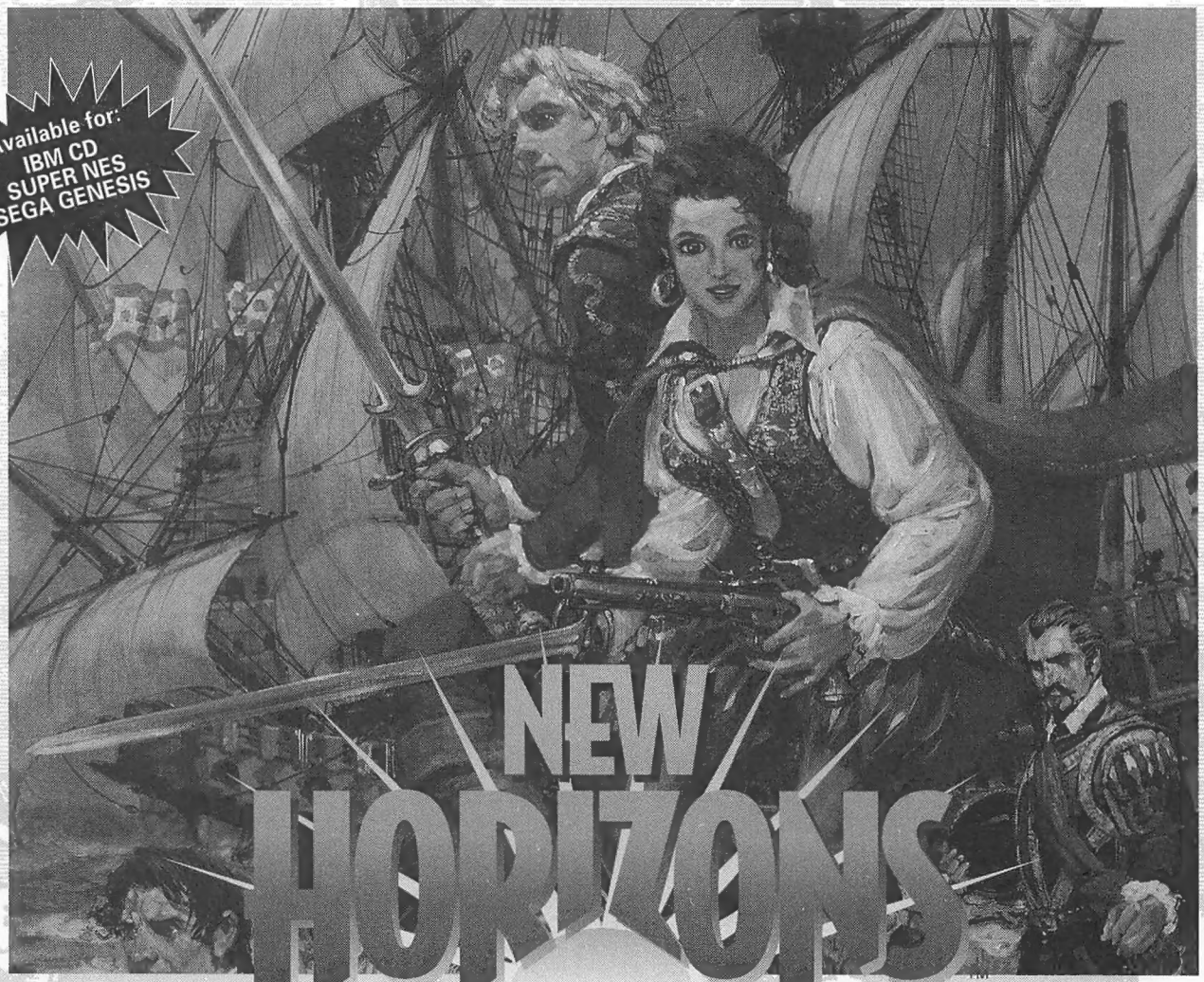

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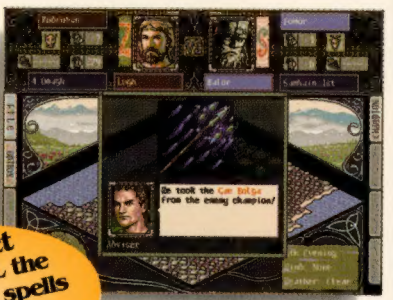

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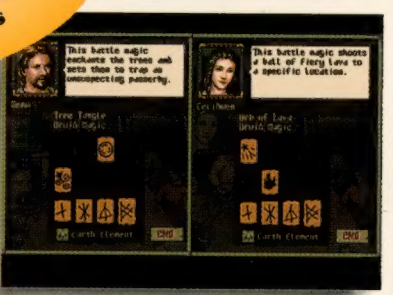

RONALD WARTOW spent over 200 hours playing *Celtic Tales: Balor of the Evil Eye*. He has written several computer game books, and his gaming exploits have been chronicled in *Personal Computing*, *MacWorld*, and *Dragon* magazines.

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